

COLIN POWELL, CONSERVATIVE ■ ARE COPS RACIST?

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A MESSAGE FROM THE
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is **SAFETY**



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Contents

May 19, 2003 / Vol. 2, No. 10



[COVER]

Surveillance State

BY JAMES BOVARD The Patriot Act makes an unbalanced trade of liberty for security. Page 8

[WORLD]

Lessons of Empire

BY CORRELLI BARNETT Britain's imperial overextension almost doomed her during her period of greatest peril. Page 12

[IMMIGRATION]

South Gate: Mexico Comes to California

BY ROGER D. MCGRATH In a generation, a working-class Los Angeles suburb became a piece of Mexico. Page 15

[EMPIRE]

Getting it Half Right

BY JACK STROCCHI An "A" in War, an "Incomplete" in Political Science Page 17

COLUMNS

7 Patrick J. Buchanan: Colin Powell, Conservative?

30 Taki: Recommended reading

NEWS & VIEWS

4 Fourteen Days: War opponents not wrong; Liberate Nigeria next; Jack Kemp, realist

ARTICLES

20 Martin Sieff: Making the Middle East Safe—for Bin Laden

21 Charles V. Peña: Missile Defense Bait and Switch

ARTS & LETTERS

23 Steve Sailer: Satirizing the folk scene

24 John Derbyshire: Dominant peoples and those who resent them

25 Justin Raimondo: The last word on America First

28 Robert Stacy McCain: Are Cops Racist? No.

COVER ILLUSTRATION: CHRIS HIER

[POSTWAR]

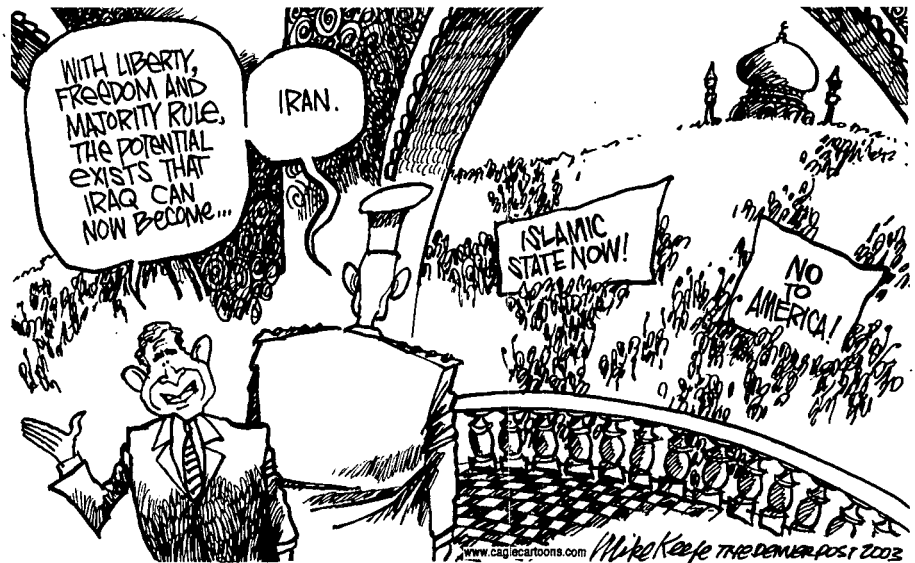
NO APOLOGIES

When U.S. troops opened fire on Iraqi demonstrators in Fallujah last week, killing 13 and wounding scores, it should have brought to a screeching halt the chatter about bringing "freedom" and "democracy" to Iraq. The world sees, with considerable justification, U.S. troops behaving much as Israel does in the occupied territories: responding to dangers that are the consequence of occupation with measures to protect its own soldiers. The fault is not with the soldiers, nor the rules of engagement, but the occupation itself, which is more obviously resented in Iraq every day.

In recent weeks, there have been myriad calls in the journals of the jingo Right for opponents of the war to issue groveling apologies, or at least to acknowledge how wrong we were. But why should we? Few opponents of the war doubted the military part could be easily won. The opposition was based on the political realities which would come after. Are Americans better off? Safer from terrorism? Beneficiaries of a stabler world?

Since Saddam's fall, hundreds of thousands of Shi'ites have taken to the streets to celebrate the new situation and denounce the continued American presence, while demanding a fundamentalist Muslim regime. Now Sunni Muslims have begun their own demonstrations, asking for the United States to leave.

The weapons of mass destruction described so forcefully in President Bush's State of the Union have yet to be found. Bush spoke of Saddam's "38,000 liters" of botulinum toxin, "25,000 liters" of material that could make anthrax, his "500 tons" of sarin, and some "30,000" chemical munitions. Perhaps this dangerous stash will be discovered soon. Perhaps it is well hidden. Perhaps it never existed, and false intelligence



information was fed to the president by those eager to push the United States into war. Or, more ominously, perhaps the weapons did exist and were spirited out of the country and transferred to terrorists after Saddam Hussein concluded an invasion was inevitable.

It is now that the real "quagmire" begins. Few Iraqi perceive the U.S. as liberators. After the shootings at Fallujah, more will concur with the Baghdad artist Hana Ibraheem, quoted last week in the *New York Times*: "How miserable life is after this liberation." By shunning the Security Council and most of America's historic allies, President Bush has made the war against al-Qaeda more difficult to prosecute effectively—as more and more of the world comes to perceive the United States as a dangerous, even as a rogue state. How can that possibly render the American people safer from terrorism? Opponents of the war have nothing to regret.

[DEMOCRACY]

NOT FOR EXPORT

The purpose for invading Iraq found expression in the facile slogan "regime change," meaning the overthrow of Sad-

dam Hussein's dictatorship and the establishment of democracy. Conservative critics of this approach have pointed out that a flourishing democracy nowhere develops overnight and indeed requires certain cultural prerequisites. The rule of law, a healthy civil society, property rights, and a free press come to mind, to name just a few. (Even something as basic as the electorate's peaceful acceptance of poll results cannot be taken for granted.) The braver among such commentators even go so far as to suggest that democracy might be a peculiarly Western system, and therefore nearly impossible to export.

If the popular unrest that has marked post-"liberation" Iraq weren't enough to make one doubt the ease of realizing a Jeffersonian vision in Mesopotamia, the recent presidential election in Nigeria certainly should be. Africa's most populous country emerged from the British Empire four decades ago but has never yet seen one civilian government succeed another. In the latest election, two former military dictators squared off against each other: the incumbent, a Christian Yoruba from the south, versus his principal challenger, a Muslim Fulani

from the north. As the London *Times* put it, "In the country's largely ideology-free politics, the southern-based, largely Christian PDP vied with the northern-based, largely Muslim ANPP for voter allegiance on religious and ethnic grounds. Policies were rarely, if ever, mentioned."

International monitors have reported all species of fraud, from ballot-box theft to voter intimidation. What's more, the challenger—Muhammadu Buhari—warned of "mass action" if the results went against him because of "fraud and intimidation." And the violence isn't just hypothetical: according to the Associated Press, "Since an April 12 legislative vote, at least 35 people have died in election-related attacks."

Nigeria, like Iraq, is a large artificial state comprising an unstable mix of ethnic and religious groups (not to mention plenty of oil). Her post-colonial experience should give us cause to wonder whether we have planted in Iraq the seeds of democracy or, like Cadmus, the dragon's teeth of misery and civil war.

[POLITICS]

BREAKING RANKS

In the mid-'90s, to those on the outside, Jack Kemp and Newt Gingrich seemed similar figures—both stalwarts of the economic-growth wing of the conservative movement, both a little too sunny about the prospects for unfettered free markets to solve American social problems, both powerful and popular in the Republican Party. Kemp never accumulated about him the sleaze and hypocrisy that eventually drove Gingrich from power, and unlike Newt, he had an uncanny ability to remain civil, even friendly, with his ideological opponents.

Given the two then, we'd far prefer Kemp on our side—and, to a degree at least, he is! The former GOP vice presidential candidate put out a statement forcefully defending Colin Powell and

the State Department against Gingrich's attack, widely considered part of a neocon effort to replace the secretary with one of their own. For good measure, he likened Newt's tirade against Powell to David Frum's attack on antiwar conservatives (an attack that included us).

There are many prominent Republicans who don't want to see their country turned into a militaristic empire, hated and feared by the world. We're delighted to count Jack Kemp among them.

[WAR AIMS]

TWO FOR ONE

During the run-up to the invasion of Iraq there was a conversation among those looking for the underlying motivations for the pre-emptive attack: was lust for oil or the neocon desire to buttress Israel's strategic position a more important factor in the push to war?

The Left preferred the former, we inclined to the latter, and neither was a totally satisfying explanation for Bush's war. Then, in a story we initially thought might be a satire from *The Onion*, there arose a synthesis. "Israel seeks pipeline for Iraqi Oil," reported the *British Observer*. The story told of plans to build a pipeline to siphon Iraqi oil to Israel, away from Syria. The new pipeline would "transform economic power in the region, bringing revenue to the new U.S. dominated Iraq, cutting out Syria, and solving Israel's energy crisis at a stroke." (Presumably Israel would not have to pay market price for the oil.)

Brilliant! This brought it all together, rather like the climactic scene in Roman Polanski's "Chinatown," where Jack Nicholson elicits the identity of the mystery woman by slapping his co-star Faye Dunaway in the face. The woman in question is "my sister" (slap), "my daughter" (slap), "my sister" (slap), "my daughter" (slap), "my sister and my daughter" (sob).

Israel and oil. ■

The American Conservative

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The American Conservative, Vol. 2, No. 10, May 19, 2003 (ISSN 1540-966X). AC is published 24 times per year, biweekly (except for double issues in January and August) for \$49.97 per year by The American Conservative, LLC, 1300 Wilson Blvd, Suite 120, Arlington VA, 22209. (703) 875-7600. Periodicals postage pending at Arlington, VA, and additional mailing offices. Printed in the United States of America. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The American Conservative*, P.O. Box 99010, Collingswood, NJ 08108-0612.

Subscription rates: \$49.97 per year (24 issues) in the U.S., \$54.97 in Canada (U.S. funds), and \$69.97 other foreign (U.S. funds). Back issues: \$6.00 (prepaid) per copy in USA, \$7.00 in Canada (U.S. funds). For subscription orders, payments, and other subscription inquiries—by mail: *The American Conservative*, P.O. Box 99010, Collingswood, NJ 08108-0612. By phone: 800-579-6148 (outside the U.S./Canada call 856-488-5321). Via the web: www.amconmag.com. When ordering a subscription please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery of your first issue and all subscription transactions. This issue went to press on May 1, 2003. Copyright 2003 *The American Conservative*. Inquiries to the editor should be sent to letters@amconmag.com.

FAREWELL TO ARMS

In response to Scott McConnell's piece (April 21), I write as one of many who, once the Sick Bear had been pushed over the brink of extinction, thought we'd had a good enough Cold War to say farewell to arms. We naïvely assumed that the world had backfired on Francis Fukuyama, and the end of history was at hand, not in the universal acceptance of liberal values, but those of paleoconservative libertarians. The goal of our *Pax Americana* was a world in which we could follow the founders' example and return to our plowing.

The neoconservatives, whose help in the Cold War we had welcomed, had other ideas, as did an assortment of true believers in many lands, and the proliferation both of means of terror and weapons of mass destruction escalated with alarming speed. All this was much remarked upon in the *National Interest*, which accordingly made lively reading, but the internecine concerns of religious conservatives and neocons left little room in the journals they colonized for *realpolitik*. *National Review*, as you correctly diagnose, ceased to be taken seriously as a policy journal as it became as absolutely predictable as the neoconservative agenda.

A journal that lacks the capacity to infuriate liberals may soon lose the attention of thoughtful conservatives, but so too can one that imagines America's national interest consonant with Ramsey Clark's. Gentlemen, take care. Boredom is an infectious process, and you have been long exposed.

RUSSELL SEITZ

Nantucket, Mass.

SOMETHING ABOUT MARY

Concerning Scott McConnell's article, "Among the Neocons" I was intrigued that he can accept that Mary [the mother of Jesus] is "Palestinian." Did the Presbyterian Church ever issue a state-

ment concerning the plight of the "Palestinians" prior to 1964? The term "Palestinian" as we understand it did not exist until the founding of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Palestine is derived from the Roman word "Philistines" and referred to the Jews. That Mother Mary is now being enlisted in the Palestinian cause is the ultimate hijacking of biblical history.

Recently, Pat Robertson spoke to a synagogue in Framingham, Mass. He mentioned Yasser Arafat, who requested a meeting with him when Robertson visited Israel. While being driven to the meeting, Robertson said, "On the way, we passed the tomb of Rachel. The driver said, 'Rachel is one of the holy mothers of Islam.' Rachel is one of the holy mothers of Islam? I remember thinking, 'Dear me, this is the propaganda war Israelis are up against!'" I can only imagine how Pat Robertson might react if he heard that Mary was a Palestinian.

AARON GOLDSTEIN

Boston, Mass.

COALITION BUILDING

I would like to thank Pat Buchanan for his insightful piece, "To Baghdad and Beyond" (April 21) on the post-Iraqi-war world and the challenges we, as Americans, will face as a result of this near-childish adventure. As a progressive from Berkeley, I was seriously wondering where all of the conservatives in this country had gone. True conservatives would have seen the Iraq war as imperialist (yes, it's about world domination); anti-democratic (the administration demonized the French and Germans who opposed this war through their democratic processes, then turned a blind eye when our Mid-Eastern despot-ic "allies" violently cracked down on dissent); and an excuse for a bigger, more intrusive federal government (two words: Patriot Act).

True American conservatives and

progressives should ally themselves. We must (temporarily) ignore our differing views on taxes, abortion, etc. for the greater cause. These days, our main agendas are practically the same: true democracy here and abroad and an end to our imperialist relationship with numerous countries. Only through an alliance of the true Right and Left can we discredit the neocons and show Americans that the actions of the Bush administration are endangering us all for decades to come.

PIERRE BASMAJI

Berkeley, Calif.

GENERATION GAP

As a 20-something living in D.C., I want to make the point that the war on Iraq, which seems to just be the beginning of a very bad trend in American foreign policy, is creating a dilemma for young conservatives. While I am not necessarily a conservative myself, I have felt a frustration in others. Chat rooms and message boards suggest that there are either conservatives (prowar on Iraq, Syria, Iran) or liberals (antiwar). But many people that I meet and speak to are conservative politically yet do not agree with where the Bush administration has decided to go. When I asked a young Republican about neocons, he had not the slightest idea who they were. Another said she was conservative but because of the unbridled influence of Israel on the Bush administration, she did not know who she would vote for in 2004. The time is ripe for someone to claim these conservative votes.

PETER KEEFER

Washington, D.C.

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Colin Powell, Conservative?

The Cold War lasted from the fall of Berlin in 1945 to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. And the two most successful presidents of that era were the only presidents

to serve two full terms: Eisenhower and Reagan.

Truman was taken in by Stalin at Potsdam and left us the "no-win war" in Korea. JFK's tenure was too brief. LBJ was broken by Vietnam, Nixon by Watergate. Ford embraced détente and presided over the loss of Southeast Asia. Carter is remembered for kissing Brezhnev and failing to end the Iranian hostage crisis.

What was the secret of the success of Eisenhower and Reagan? Both were conservatives. Both were prudent and patient. Both knew time was on America's side. Both understood the truth of what A.J.P. Taylor wrote: "This is an odd inescapable dilemma. Though the object of being a Great Power is to be able to fight a great war, the only way of remaining a Great Power is not to fight one, or to fight it on a limited scale."

Looking at the deaths of all the empires that entered the 20th century—the German, Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, French, British, Japanese, Russian—all perished because they fought one war too many. Imperial overstretch killed them all. The United States is the lone superpower left because we were the last to enter the world wars, and, so, suffered least.

Eisenhower saw his first duty as wrapping up Korea even if it meant a cease-fire at the DMZ. He refused to bomb Indochina to save the French at Dienbienphu. When Britain, France, and Israel invaded Suez, Ike ordered them out. When the Hungarians heroically

rebelled, Ike did not intervene. Who ruled Budapest did not threaten American vital interests. It was hard-headed and cold-blooded, but who is to say now Ike was wrong? And after Castro showed his colors, Ike would have gone in, and there would have been no loss of nerve at any Bay of Pigs.

During his tenure, defense rose to nine percent of GDP as Ike built up the bomber fleets and missile forces to deter any Soviet attack. He believed in Peace through Strength, not peace through permanent war.

Reagan began a military buildup Moscow could not match and supported anti-Soviet rebels in Angola, Nicaragua, and Afghanistan. But like Ike, Reagan never sent a U.S. army to fight a foreign war. Grenada was a walkover that swept a Soviet pawn off the board. His great mistake, putting Marines in Lebanon in the midst of a religious-ethnic civil war, proved costly. But Reagan had the courage to admit a mistake. He pulled out and never went back.

But for not invading Lebanon and smashing the Islamic militias who blew up the Marine barracks, Reagan is today condemned by the same neoconservatives who see Colin Powell as the principal impediment to their *Pax Americana*. They believe the way to win the War on Terror is to widen it into "World War IV" and overthrow all the undemocratic regimes of the Middle East.

This issue is at the heart of the struggle over U.S. foreign policy. Is interventionism the way to defeat Islamic

extremism? Or is intervention and its concomitant, empire, more likely to spread the infection? In Iraq, final returns are not in, but the outbreak of anti-Americanism suggests that we may have created our own Lebanon.

The presence of Powell, a realist in the War Cabinet, is today the best guarantee the president will not launch the kind of utopian crusade that brought down all the other Great Powers. For while the neocons were doing graduate work at Harvard and Yale, Powell was doing his in Vietnam. That is the difference. The Powell Doctrine that came out of Vietnam—"Don't commit the army until you commit the nation!"—is the quintessence of conservatism. Powell's belief that war is a last resort, but that if we must fight, we go in with overwhelming force, win, and get out, is also faithful to U.S. traditions from Washington to Wilson.

Looking back, it was the conservatives who kept us out of the bloodletting in France until 1918, out of the League of Nations entanglements and commitments, out of World War II until Hitler turned on Stalin and the bloody partners tore each other to pieces long before the Americans arrived on the coast of France in 1944.

Looking ahead, there is no threat on the horizon to justify World War IV. Not China, which is contained by her neighbors. Not Islamic fundamentalism, which has failed everywhere it has been tried, from Afghanistan to Iran to Sudan. As in the Cold War, with patience and prudence, America can outlast them all. And in the struggle to prevent the rise of an empire that will surely collapse in blood, Colin Powell is true conservatism's ally. ■

[give me liberty]

Surveillance State

Since September 11, a flood of federal legislation has reduced American freedom without increasing our security.

By James Bovard

PERHAPS YOU'VE VISITED your local library to keep speed with the War on Terror: borrowed a few books on Islamic fundamentalism or did web research on biochemical weapons. Beware.

Last January, an FBI agent entered a branch of the St. Louis Public Library and requested a list of all the sign-up sheets showing names of people who used library computers on Dec. 28, 2002. Even though the FBI agent did not have a warrant or subpoena, the library quickly surrendered the list of all users. The FBI acted because someone phoned in a tip that they "smelled something strange" about a library patron of Middle Eastern descent.

Welcome to America under the Patriot Act. One person claims to "smell something," and the feds can round up everyone's records. From books you check out to credit card purchases, money transfers to medications, your activities are now subject to federal surveillance. Uncle Sam now has a blank check to search and pry—all in the name of security.

Last October, then House Majority Leader Dick Armey branded our own Justice Department "the biggest threat

to personal liberty in the country." And while that characterization of a Republican Justice Department makes many conservatives cringe, the DOJ has been working overtime to expand its power—and the biggest danger may be yet to come.

When John Ashcroft was in the U.S. Senate, he was a leader in the fight to protect Americans' privacy. In an August 1997 op-ed, Ashcroft declared, "This is no reason to hand Big Brother the keys to unlock our e-mail diaries, open our ATM records, read our medical records, or translate our international communications." His early days as attorney general showed a keen appreciation for the Bill of Rights' constraints. That changed on 9/11.

Within days of the Twin Towers' collapse, Ashcroft began strong-arming Congress to enact sweeping anti-terrorism legislation—and Americans seemed ready to trade a measure of liberty to restore their shaken security. The month of the attacks, an NBC/*Wall Street Journal* poll found 78 percent willing to have Internet activity monitored. The administration took this as free rein, moving swiftly to enact the Patriot (Provide

Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism) Act. Some of its provisions were simply updates to existing law. As Sen. Russell Feingold (D-Wis.), the only senator to vote against the act observed, "It made sense to stiffen penalties and lengthen or eliminate statutes of limitation for certain terrorist crimes." But the Patriot Act goes far beyond "good government" amendments.

It empowers federal agents to cannibalize Americans' e-mail with Carnivore wiretaps, allows federal agents to commandeer library records, and requires banks to surrender personal account information. It also authorizes federal agents to confiscate bulk cash from travelers who fail to fill out Customs Service forms disclosing how much money they are taking out of or into the U.S. and allows the attorney general to order long-term detentions if he has "reasonable grounds to believe that the alien is engaged in any activity that endangers the national security of the United States." Last year alone, Ashcroft personally issued 170 emergency domestic spying warrants, permitting agents to carry out wiretaps and search homes and offices for up to 72 hours before requesting a



CHRIS HERS

search warrant from the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court.

When privacy-minded legislators question these new powers, the Justice Department stonewalls. House Judiciary Chairman James Sensenbrenner (R-Wis.) threatened to subpoena the DOJ last summer to get information to which his committee is specifically entitled. Justice eventually divulged a few fragments of information but has refused to reveal the number of secret searches, the number of libraries whose records have been seized, and how often Carnivore e-mail wiretaps have been used. Freedom has apparently become so fragile that citizens can no longer be permitted to know how often their government invades their privacy.

Some intrusive provisions of the Patriot Act were temporary—set to expire in 2005 absent Congressional reauthorization. But Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, recently proposed making the federal prying powers permanent.

The Wrong Response

The Patriot Act was rushed into law before any effort was made to understand why the feds failed to stop the 9/11 attacks. The government could have done a better job of tracking the terrorist suspects, but the feds had all the relevant information to detect and block the conspiracy to hijack four airplanes. The Joint House-Senate Intelligence Committee observed that the FBI's negligence "contributed to the United States becoming, in effect, a sanctuary for radical terrorists." Its investigation concluded, "It is at least a possibility that increased analysis, sharing and focus would have drawn greater attention to the growing potential for a major terrorist attack in the United States involving the aviation industry."

But the administration rewarded failure by the FBI and intelligence agencies with bigger budgets, more power, and presidential commendations. There is nothing in the Patriot Act that can solve

the problem of FBI agents who do not understand the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act or solve the shortage of CIA and National Security Agency employees who can read intercepted messages in the languages of prime terrorist threats. Neither does the legislation compensate for lackadaisical federal agents who failed to add promptly the names of al-Qaeda members to terrorism watch-lists or of analysts who ignored the cascading warnings of terrorists using stolen airplanes as flying bombs. The success of the 9/11 hijackers was due far more to a lack of government competence than to a shortfall in government power. Yet the Bush administration has successfully suppressed investigations and revelations of federal failures, thereby permitting Ashcroft and others to portray new government powers as the key to national safety.

The Justice Department isn't the only agency taking aim at American liberties. The Department of Transportation has compiled secret "no fly" lists of passen-

gers suspected of terrorist ties—or at least those critical of the administration. In one instance, two dozen members of a peace group, students chaperoned by a priest and nun, were detained en route to a teach-in thus missing their flight.

The Department of Defense is piling on with its Total Information Awareness program. TIA's goal is to stockpile as much information as possible about everyone on Earth—thereby allowing government to protect everyone from everything. *New York Times* columnist William Safire warned, "Every purchase you make with a credit card, every magazine subscription you buy and medical prescription you fill, every Web site you visit and e-mail you send or receive, every academic grade you receive, every bank deposit you make, every trip you book and every event you attend—all these transactions and communications will go into what the Defense Department describes as 'a virtual, centralized grand database.'" Columnist Ted Rall noted that the feds will even scan "veterinary records. The TIA believes that knowing if and when Fluffy got spayed—and whether your son stopped torturing Fluffy after you put him on Ritalin—will help the military stop terrorists before they strike."

Congress passed a law seeking to rein in TIA. The Pentagon, however, is bargaining forward, and the congressional provision specifies that if Bush formally certifies that TIA is necessary for national security, the law is null and void.

Coming Soon: Patriot II

In February, the Center for Public Integrity obtained and released an 86-page draft version of the Domestic Security Enhancement Act—quickly dubbed Patriot II. Notations on the Justice Department document—stamped "Confidential—Not for Distribution" on every page—showed that it had already been

sent to Vice President Cheney and House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.). Justice Department spokesman Mark Corallo dismisses DSEA as a benign sequel, "filling in the holes" in the Patriot Act.

Section 101 of the proposed bill, titled "Individual Terrorists as Foreign Powers," would revise the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) to permit the U.S. government to label individuals who are suspected terrorists—including American citizens—as "foreign powers" for the purpose of conducting total sur-

veillance of their activities. This alteration nullifies all Fourth Amendment rights of the target, allowing the government to tap phones, search computers, and read e-mail—even when there is no evidence that a citizen is violating any statute. If Section 101 becomes law, the more people the feds wrongfully accuse of being terrorists, the more power federal agents will receive.

Americans suspected of gathering information for a foreign power could be subject to FISA surveillance even though they were violating no law and the information gathered did not pertain to national security. The administration's confidential explanation of proposed Section 102 notes, "Requiring the additional showing that the intelligence gathering violates the laws of the United States is both unnecessary and counterproductive, as such activities threaten the national security regardless of whether they are illegal." But, as the ACLU noted, "This amendment would permit electronic surveillance of a local activist who was preparing a report on human rights for London-based Amnesty International, a 'foreign political organ-

ization,' even if the activist was not engaged in any violation of law."

While some parts of the new bill would overturn federal court decisions, Section 106 is more visionary, seeking to negate principles established in the Nuremberg trials: that following orders is no excuse for violating the law. As proposed, it would permit federal agents illegally to wiretap and surveil and leak damaging personal information on Americans—as long as they are following orders from the president or the

SECTION 106 SEEKS TO NEGATE PRINCIPLES ESTABLISHED IN THE NUREMBERG TRIALS: THAT FOLLOWING ORDERS IS NO EXCUSE FOR VIOLATING THE LAW.

attorney general. The Senate COINTEL-PRO investigation revealed how President Johnson and top Nixon aides personally ordered federal agents to conduct illegal surveillance of political opponents and others, though neither the FBI nor LBJ was ever held accountable. This proposal is a further attempt to make federal agents legally untouchable and could encourage law-breaking at every level of the federal government.

Section 129, entitled "Strengthening Access to and Use of Information in National Security Investigations," would empower federal agents to issue "national security letters" that compel businesses and other institutions to surrender confidential or proprietary information without a court order. Anyone hit with such a letter will be obliged to remain forever silent on the demand with disclosure punishable by up to five years in prison. The ACLU noted that this provision would "reduce judicial oversight of terrorism investigations by relegating the role of the judge to considering challenges to orders already issued, rather than ensuring such orders are drawn with due regard for the privacy and

other interests of the target." This turns the Fourth Amendment on its head by creating a presumption that the government is entitled to personal or confidential information unless the citizen or business can prove to a federal judge that the "national security letter" should not be enforced against them. But few Americans can afford the cost of litigating against the world's largest law firm—the U.S. Justice Department—to preserve their privacy.

Secret mass arrests could be the result of Section 201. The provision notes, "Although existing Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) exemptions ... permit the government to protect information relating to detainees, defending this interpretation through litigation requires extensive Department of Justice resources, which would be better spent detecting and incapacitate [*sic*] terrorists." In the wake of 9/11, the feds locked up over 1,200 "special interest" detainees and continually insisted that none of their names or details of their cases could be disclosed without endangering national survival, though federal courts denounced the secret arrests as "odious to democracy" or "profoundly undemocratic." To save the Justice Department the bother of having to defend secret round-ups, the Bush administration now seeks to amend the federal statute book to imitate repressive dictatorships around the globe.

Section 312, "Appropriate Remedies with Respect to Law Enforcement Surveillance Activities," would unleash local law enforcement to spy on Americans, nullifying almost all federal, state, and local court "consent decrees" that restrict the power of local and state police. The administration complains that such decrees result in police lacking "the ability to use the full range of investigative techniques that are lawful under the Constitution, and that are available to the FBI." But, in every case, consent

decrees were imposed after gross abuses of citizens' rights by the police. The administration draft bill explanation declares, "All surviving decrees would have to be necessary to correct a current and ongoing violation of a Federal right, extend no further than necessary to correct the violation of the Federal right, and be narrowly drawn and the least intrusive means to correct the violation." Historically, the Supreme Court has required the federal government to use the "least intrusive means" to achieve some policy in cases involving the First Amendment, in order to prevent any unnecessary restriction of freedom of speech. The administration now demands the "least intrusive" restrictions on government intrusions.

Section 402 would permit U.S. attorneys to prosecute Americans for aiding terrorist organizations even if they made donations to organizations that the U.S. government did not publicly label as terrorist groups. Yale Law School professor Jack Balkin said, "Give a few dollars to a Muslim charity Ashcroft thinks is a terrorist organization and you could be on the next plane out of this country." Robert Higgs of the Independent Institution warns that the feds "can categorize

routinely included on new computers and is commonly used for business transactions. The Justice Department thus seeks to treat use of encryption software the same way that the federal government treats gun possession—something sinister enough to justify routinely doubling or tripling prison sentences for people who violate other federal statutes, regardless of whether the gun was actually used.

Critics label Section 501 of the bill the "citizenship death penalty." Under existing law, an American must state his intent to relinquish his citizenship in order to lose it. Under this provision, intent "need not be manifested in words but can be inferred from conduct," thus empowering the Justice Department to strip Americans of their citizenship if the feds accuse them of supporting terrorism—either domestic or international. The American Immigration Lawyers Association cautions that, under this provision, "targeted [U.S. citizens] potentially could find themselves consigned to indefinite detention as undocumented immigrants in their own country."

Shortly after the text of Patriot II surfaced, the attorney general was asked at a press conference about this expansion

ROBERT HIGGS OF THE INDEPENDENT INSTITUTION WARNS THAT THE FEDS "CAN CATEGORIZE THE **MOST INNOCENT ACTION**"—SUCH AS "SIGNING A PETITION"—AS AN **ACT OF TERRORISM**.

the most innocent action"—such as "signing a petition"—as an act of terrorism.

Users of Pretty Good Privacy and other common encryption software could face greater perils from Section 404, which creates "a new, separate crime of using encryption technology that could add five years or more to any sentence for crimes committed with a computer," the ACLU notes. Encryption software is

of federal power. He refused to confirm plans formally to propose Patriot II but did declare, "Every day we are asking each other, what can we do to be more successful in securing the freedoms of America and sustaining the liberty, the tolerance, the human dignity that America represents, and how can we do a better job in defeating the threat of terrorism."

Despite Ashcroft's reassurances, resistance is building. Eighty-nine cities have passed resolutions condemning the Patriot Act, and a coalition is stretching across ideological lines to oppose it. Recently the ACLU drafted a letter to Congress and found 67 organizations from the conservative Gun Owners of America to the liberal La Raza eager to sign on. They accuse Patriot II of "new and sweeping law enforcement and intelligence gathering powers, many of which are not related to terrorism, that would severely dilute, if not undermine, basic constitutional rights."

Three months after 9/11, Ashcroft announced, "To those who scare peace-loving people with phantoms of lost liberty, my message is this, your tactics only aid terrorists for they erode our national unity and ... give ammunition to American's enemies." Ashcroft is wrong to portray any criticism of Bush administration civil liberties policies as aiding and abetting terrorism. America is overdue for a searching examination of the powers the Bush administration has seized and the powers it is seeking. ■

James Bovard is the author of the forthcoming Terrorism & Tyranny: How Bush's Crusade is Sabotaging Freedom, Justice, and Peace

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Lessons of Empire

Britain's colonies drained the Mother Country.

By Correlli Barnett

IN HER WAR WITH IRAQ, America has acted much like imperial Britain more than a century ago, when in a very different world she invaded the Sudan, killed the Dervish leader at the 1898 Battle of Omdurman, and, thanks to quick-firing artillery and machine guns, slaughtered 11,000 of his ill-armed followers on the field. This is, therefore, an appropriate moment to compare the United States as the imperial power today to Britain as an empire passed.

During the mercantilist 18th century, trade and territorial conquest advanced together, first at the expense of Holland and then of France. This dual process was exemplified by The Honorable East India Company, which, though a commercial enterprise, also ruled the British dominion in India. By the time of the American Revolution, there had evolved an Atlantic protectionist "common market" under the Union Flag, with complementary flows of commodities between the North American colonies, the West Indian sugar islands, and the Mother Country. The profits from this British Empire paid for the Royal Navy, which in turn promoted and protected the Empire's expansion.

All this changed in the Victorian era when Britain adopted free trade in place of mercantilism, and markets under the Flag lost their old pre-eminence. At the same time, evangelical religion created a new imperial ruling class who believed it their duty to civilize the native races, especially in India, "the jewel in the Crown" of Empire. The poisonous first

fruit of this attempt to impose Western values was the so-called Indian Mutiny in 1857, a violent uprising of the Indian army against its British officers and British rule as a whole, which was crushed by British troops with equal violence. Meanwhile, thanks to the Royal Navy's then mastery of the seas, British settlements had been planted in Australia and New Zealand, more than 10,000 miles from the homeland.

By the 1860s, free-trade Britain enjoyed an apparently permanent hegemony over world commerce and finance. But only two decades later this dominance came under threat from the rise of new continental-scale rivals like America and the German Empire. The response in Britain was to revive the concept of the British Empire. It was argued that in order to remain a pre-eminent world power, Britain must weld her historic rummage-bag of possessions—but especially the English-speaking colonies like Australia and New Zealand—into a single strategic and economic entity masterminded from London.

But this vision of a new oceanic superpower proved impossible to realize. The colonists overseas were swiftly growing into nations in themselves, increasingly jealous of their independence. By the Statute of Westminster in 1930, the Dominions of Canada, Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand became fully independent nations whose only formal link with Britain and each other was a monarchy in common.

By this time too, the attempt to create

a common market had failed. There was little correlation between the global pattern of British markets and investments, and the "red on the map." In 1938, for instance, India, Britain's grandest imperial possession, took less than eight percent of British exports.

Yet the myth of Empire had seized British minds. Queen Victoria's Golden and Diamond Jubilees in 1887 and 1897 marked the beginning of a public-relations empire, and even the British elite swallowed the fantasy. Through the 1920s and 30s there was much mention of The Empire in political discourse; every Christmas the King spoke to it on the wireless. In this way the British convinced themselves that the existence of the commonwealth made Britain a first-class world power. Yet the truth was that by the 1930s the Empire had become a net drain on British strength—one of the most remarkable examples of strategic overextension in history.

Britain herself, an island state of only 45 million people, provided the bulk of the Empire's industrial resources and of its naval and military strength. As the Mother Country, Britain also accepted a moral obligation to defend the Empire in its global sprawl, while the Dominions accepted no reciprocal obligation towards Britain's security in Europe. Even in the face of dictators Britain found it impossible to persuade the Dominions to agree on common foreign and defense policies, let alone joint military contingency plans. There never was an imperial NATO. Moreover, the ruling elite's sense of responsibility for the non-European peoples of the Empire caused Britain to cling on in places like India even though it was no longer an economic asset and garrisoning it in peacetime swallowed up a third of the British army.

The emergence by 1937 of a triple menace from Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and militaristic Japan, presented Britain with an insoluble dilemma. She neither

possessed, nor could afford to create, armed forces strong enough to parry this threat. Nor, for that matter, could her now obsolescent industrial base produce the armaments. When Britain began to re-arm in 1936, she had to import large quantities of machine tools and military kit from abroad, mostly Europe and America. By 1938-39, these imports were fast running her towards a balance-of-payments crisis.

In spring 1939, the British Chiefs of Staff warned that Britain could only hope to win a long war, while the Treasury warned that she could only afford a short war. Even if outright defeat could be averted, ruin was inevitable, and thus it proved in World War II. From April 1941 onwards, Britain depended for her war effort and indeed for national life itself on American subsidies under Lend-Lease. Then, in 1941-42, the façade of Empire collapsed when the British colonies in southeast Asia fell to the Japanese, and Australia and New Zealand passed under American protection. Nemesis had at last overtaken a strategy flawed by the coupling of imperial self-delusion with imperial overstretch.

BRITAIN ACCEPTED A MORAL OBLIGATION TO DEFEND THE EMPIRE, WHILE THE DOMINIONS ACCEPTED NO RECIPROCAL OBLIGATION.

The power of the American onslaught on Iraq might seem to demonstrate that the United States could never become similarly overextended. Certainly, there is little in common between Britain and the U.S. in their development as imperial powers. By the time of World War I, the United States had developed into a self-contained economy of unrivaled scale and power, the very opposite of Britain's island economy meshed into world markets. And whereas the Royal Navy had always been an inherent

necessity to Britain's vast oceanic trade, the American battle fleet constructed after 1900 was—as Churchill said of the German High Seas Fleet at the same time—a "luxury fleet," developed purely in order to project American power in pursuit of Teddy Roosevelt's vision of America's Manifest Destiny.

Thus while Britain acquired an empire piecemeal largely as the by-product of a hunt for markets, the overseas expansion of the U.S. began as a project of national ambition. Her colonies of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines were of minor economic value to her continental economy, while being strategically irrelevant to her continental security.

It was that Methodist academic of a president, Woodrow Wilson, who during World War I gave an extraordinary twist to the notion of Manifest Destiny by proclaiming that America must now create and uphold a new world order based on American values. The Fourteen Points were inspired not by calculation of America's strategic or economic interests, but by the ideology of Christian righteousness. This was, after all, the belief that had taken the Pilgrim Fathers

to New England in 1620, which their descendents took with them to the Midwest and beyond, and which today shapes the worldview of George W. Bush's Washington.

Between the world wars, America's Manifest Destiny—whether of Woodrow Wilson's or Teddy Roosevelt's brand—was temporarily eclipsed by non-interventionism as advocated by the Founding Fathers. Yet, willy-nilly, the American Empire in the Pacific rendered continental isolationism no longer possible.

With Old Glory flying in the Philippines less than 400 miles from the Chinese mainland, the United States was brought face to face with militaristic Japan by that country's invasion of China. For moral rather than strategic reasons Franklin Roosevelt took China's side, at first politically and then in 1941 by imposing an economic embargo on Japan. This led in turn to the pre-emptive Japanese strike on Pearl Harbor that pitchforked America into the Second World War. Victory in 1945 over Germany and Japan brought the United States into direct confrontation with the Soviet Empire, especially in Europe. Here were ultimate consequences of Teddy Roosevelt's imperialist annexations that he could hardly have foreseen. Yet victory also bestowed on America the economic and strategic hegemony over the whole Western world (now including a Japan ruled by an American viceroy).

America was the only belligerent to emerge from the war not ruined but actually richer and industrially stronger. The firm base of American hegemony therefore lay in an economy of overwhelming size and productivity. To exercise effective imperial control, however, demands institutional mechanisms, and these the United States proceeded to set up: in the economic sphere, the Organization for European Economic Cooperation and the Marshall Plan; in the financial sphere, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Bretton Woods system of fixed exchange rates pegged to the dollar. The unprecedented and continuing status of the dollar as an international reserve currency has meant that America could keep running enormous budget and balance-of-payments deficits—as she still does.

In the politico-strategic sphere, the United States was the dominant founding member of the United Nations in 1945. She believed that a consensus among the great powers on the UN Security

Council (along with America's then monopoly of the atom bomb) would provide security on the cheap, though the slide into the Cold War with the Soviet Union doomed this notion. Instead, by the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 and the creation of NATO in 1950, the United States committed herself to the long-term defense of Europe.

When President Truman launched the United States into the Korean War in 1950, it marked a fateful first step along the road of far-off military interventions reminiscent of Britain's Victorian imperial wars. Yet the British experience offers no parallel to the sheer extent of American strategic involvement around the world by the 1960s in pursuit of containment of the Soviet Union. Alliances and mutual security pacts committed the U.S. to the protection of countries in almost every continent at enormous cost in a global spread of garrisons, air bases, and carrier fleets.

In 1965, came the most fateful imperial foray of all, when President Lyndon Johnson launched American forces into the Vietnam War. Why did he do it? Vietnam had no oil fields, industries, or key raw materials—only rice fields. The answer lies in America's central motivation in waging the Cold War: ideological hatred of Communism. With rare exceptions (George Kennan, Henry Kissinger), American policy-makers did not regard the Soviet Union as simply a rival power bloc, but as an evil empire threatening the free world. Such righteousness justified the global commitments and military adventure. British imperial rulers in their time had been far more pragmatic.

The collapse of the Soviet Empire in 1990 might seem to have proved America's cold warriors right. Yet this victory only replaced a stable bipolar world with one highly confused and unstable. In consequence, American imperial involvement has expanded: in Europe with military interventions and now

standing garrisons in Bosnia and Kosovo; in the Middle East with the Gulf War and its legacy of military presence on Arab soil in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere that has inflamed the Islamic hatred so cunningly exploited by Osama bin Laden.

This Islamic venom, focused through al-Qaeda, provoked Washington to proclaim a new ideological world conflict—a war on terrorism. Thus began a further stage in American imperial expansion: the conquest of Afghanistan; commitment of special forces in Aden, Somalia, the Philippines, and Indonesia; and now the occupation of Iraq, a target more easily identified and demolished by America's military machine than the elusive al-Qaeda network. Beyond Iraq loom other members of "the axis of evil" who may soon become objects of the new doctrine of pre-emptive attack. Does this mean the United States is nearing that breakpoint of empires gone before: overstretch to the point that the national economy cracks under the weight of the imperial role?

Already \$75 billion has been budgeted for the Iraq war and collateral purposes. The price tag on postwar reconstruction has been put at some \$50 billion. Five years of military occupation will cost another \$43 billion. To these costs add an annual defense budget of \$380 billion. This enormous extra load is being incurred at the time when the American economy is faltering amid fears of a global recession. There is deep unease as to whether America can continue to run a huge budget deficit atop a massive trade deficit. Are we looking at a super-Enron, supremely powerful but about to implode? The graveyard of empires suggests as much. ■

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[montezuma's revenge]

South Gate: Mexico Comes to California

How an all-American town became a barrio.

By Roger D. McGrath

WHILE WE ARE ENGAGED overseas in a mission to recreate countries in our own image and likeness, many of our own cities are being transformed into the image and likeness of Mexican villages. Nowhere is this more apparent than California. The city of South Gate, a dozen miles southeast of Los Angeles, is a prime example. Until the 1920s the area that is today South Gate was home to dairies—many of them operated by Danish immigrant families—and vegetable and fruit farms. Then subdivision began, and housing tracts and industrial parks started to replace fields and barns. In 1923, with a population of 2,500, the city of South Gate was incorporated, and a volunteer fire department was organized. Firestone Tire and Rubber Company built its factory on a 40-acre former bean field, and a chemical plant and foundry were established. Jobs were plentiful and housing was relatively inexpensive. The local economy boomed.

The market crash of '29 slowed development, but new industries continued to be established, including a General Motors plant that employed 4,000 workers assembling Pontiacs, Oldsmobiles, and Buicks. The population was mostly blue collar: many of the new arrivals during the 1930s were Dust Bowl migrants who brought with them "hillbilly" music, Protestant fundamentalism, and a raw-boned toughness. The coming of World

War II initiated a second boom, which continued in the postwar years until the population reached some 55,000 by 1964. The next year South Gate began to change. In August 1965, the Watts riots erupted. Watts was virtually 100 percent black, and South Gate, immediately to the east of Watts, was nearly 100 percent white. Although the rioters were mostly confined to black areas of south-central Los Angeles and did not cross the line into South Gate, younger whites in South Gate started to look elsewhere to buy their first houses. As the white population of South Gate began to decline, the Mexican population, which earlier had established a foothold, began to increase.

By the mid-1970s, with illegal immigration unchecked, Mexicans were a substantial minority of South Gate's population. By the 1980s they were the majority. Today, South Gate is 93 percent Hispanic. Of the town's 90,000 Hispanics, 1,100 are from South America, 1,300 from Cuba or Puerto Rico, 6,200 from Central America, and the rest from Mexico. Exactly how many are illegal aliens or children of illegal aliens is difficult to assess, but two-thirds is probably a conservative estimate. Nearly half of South Gate's population was born outside of the United States, and 80 percent of the town's residents speak Spanish at home.

South Gate High School is 99 percent Hispanic. Of almost 3,400 students there are only 15 blacks and 17 whites. A quarter of the students speak little or no English, and 85 percent of the students receive free meals at the school. Test scores are abysmal. On a state testing scale of 1 to 10, the high school scores a 2.

Many, if not most, of Los Angeles County's cities may soon resemble South Gate. From 1980-1990 the number of Hispanics residing in the county increased by 62 percent while the number of whites decreased by nine percent, and a similar pattern continued through the next decade. The change in demographics has brought a change in politics. As South Gate resident Julia Baraza said, "It's like I never left Mexico."

One reason is Albert Robles. A former aide to a Mexican-American state legislator, Robles moved to South Gate when the demographics turned to his favor and was elected to the city council in 1992. At that time the job was part-time, and council members were paid \$600 a month. A few years later, while still serving as a councilman, he was elected to the local water board at a compensation of \$23,000 a year. In 1997, he won the race for city treasurer and began collecting an annual salary of \$69,000. Meanwhile, Robles had seen to it that his friends and business associates were awarded city contracts worth

millions. What Robles was getting out of these deals is anybody's guess, but his political opponents were not faring nearly as well. City councilman Henry Gonzalez was shot in the head but survived the wound. Another political rival had his car firebombed. The crimes remain unsolved.

In the spring of 2002, just when Robles was on the verge of turning South Gate into his personal fiefdom, he was arrested on felony threat charges. Astonishingly, after his arrest his cronies on the city council appointed him deputy city manager at \$110,000 a year and ordered the city to pay his legal bills.

ROBLES THREATENED TO KIDNAP THE ASSEMBLYMAN, THROW HIM IN A CAR TRUNK, AND DRIVE HIM ACROSS THE BORDER TO TIJUANA.

At his trial in December, prosecutors argued that Robles threatened to rape state Senator Martha Escutia and kill her husband. Escutia testified that she had hired personal bodyguards and had dared to set foot in South Gate only twice in two years even though she represents the city in the state legislature. A friend of state Assemblyman Marco Firebaugh testified that Robles had threatened to kidnap the assemblyman, throw him in a car trunk, drive him across the border to Tijuana, and "blow his brains out." Robles's attorneys acknowledged that he had said such things but argued it was protected speech and nothing more than bombast typical of South Gate politicians.

The trial ended in a hung jury. Robles's legal fees, paid by South Gate, came to a million dollars, about 10 percent of the city's annual budget. Xochilt Ruvalcaba, then the mayor of South Gate and a Robles crony, declared, "Clearly, the jury's message was a strong indication they understood this case was political-

ly motivated and without merit." Coming to a different conclusion was South Gate councilman and Robles critic Hector De La Torre, who said, "It's making us look like some third-world, petty dictatorship where all kinds of political intrigue and craziness is going on all the time."

The political intrigue included stripping the city clerk, Carmen Avalos, of all her authority. Known for her honesty and forthrightness, she made the mistake of complaining about corruption and election fraud in South Gate to California Secretary of State Bill Jones. After studying Avalos's allegations, Jones

declared South Gate's city elections the most corrupt in the state. Reacting to her co-operation, several dozen supporters of the Robles machine cornered Avalos at City Hall and chanted "Malinche," a reference to the Aztec mistress of the conquistador Hernan Cortes. To those supporters, both Avalos and Malinche had sold out to the white man.

As punishment, Avalos's salary was reduced from \$76,000 to \$7,200. She was prohibited from attending staff meetings, her three-person staff was eliminated, and she was restricted to three minutes speaking time—the same given to any member of the public—at city council meetings. When Avalos exceeded her three-minute limitation, mayor Ruvalcaba pulled the plug on her microphone. (Ruvalcaba has carried a grudge against Avalos since she defeated his sister in the election for city clerk in 2001. Two days after the election, Avalos found a teddy bear on her front lawn with its throat slashed and its arms torn off.)

All of this finally sparked a movement

to recall Treasurer Robles, Mayor Ruvalcaba, the vice mayor, and a councilwoman, who also happens to be Ruvalcaba's cousin. When the city used every device imaginable to block the recall drive, Secretary of State Jones took action. "The voters of South Gate confront some of the most serious allegations of official misconduct and voter intimidation that I have ever seen," said Jones. Enough signatures were eventually gathered for a recall election scheduled for late January 2003.

Campaigning could have taken place somewhere in Jalisco or Michoacan. Robles & Co. had the city give everyone a month of free trash collection, hand out baskets filled with groceries, present a plan for free medical care at a new city health clinic, and hold a drawing for a house. The drawing for the house was held at City Hall, gaily dressed with yellow balloons and reverberating with *ranchera* music.

To the credit of South Gate voters, the Robles junta came tumbling down in the recall election, an election the *Los Angeles Times* admitted had "echoes of Third World-style campaigns." Treasurer Robles, Mayor Ruvalcaba, Vice Mayor Raul Moriel, and Councilwoman Maria Benavides were voted out of office, but they had one week left and one final city council meeting before those elected in the recall replaced them. At the meeting a dispute arose over allowing a resident to speak. The resident noted that he had properly filled out a speaker's card and that it had been appropriately recorded. This left Mayor Ruvalcaba unmoved, and she refused to return the speaker's card. Councilman Gonzalez then tried to pull the card from Ruvalcaba's hand. Ruvalcaba responded with an overhand right that caught Gonzalez on the cheek. She then ran out of council chambers pursued by several police officers as the crowd chanted, "Arrest the mayor!"

Earlier in the day, the public learned

that an FBI investigation into the corruption at South Gate City Hall had resulted in a federal grand jury issuing a subpoena for city documents germane to federal loans and grants awarded by the city to former business partners of Robles. It would be a few weeks before the public learned of the spending spree that the outgoing city officials had engaged in during their lame-duck week in office. Mayor Ruvalcaba and Treasurer Robles signed checks amounting to more than \$2 million, mostly to pay for attorneys for themselves. On the day before the newly elected city officials came into office, Assistant Finance Director Yimu Chen said he was forced to use the city's reserve fund as Robles, City Manager Jesus Marez, and several lawyers stood over him. "I was basically under duress to sign the checks," noted Chen. Marez kept administrators at City Hall until 9:30 p.m., spending more than \$1 million. The spending spree nearly exhausted what was left of the city's reserves and has caused the state to initiate an audit. "It was a feeding frenzy of attorneys is what it was," claimed South Gate's new mayor, Hector De La Torre.

One of those lawyers was South Gate City Attorney Salvador Alva who was paid \$269,000 during the final week. Another was Cristeta Paguirigan, a disbarred attorney with three convictions for embezzlement and one for forgery who was paid \$200 an hour for advice on litigation. Hundreds of thousands of dollars went to criminal defense lawyers representing Robles and his allies.

South Gate, nearly bankrupt, has been forced to layoff 200 employees, and more layoffs are expected. Ironically, those employees who were part of the Robles machine need not fear being fired—they all have contracts with guaranteed severance packages should they be terminated. Most of them have been with the city only a year and were hired after Robles got the city council to eliminate

South Gate's traditional standards for employment, including a college degree and municipal experience. The city manager and department directors have severance packages that include 18 months of salary. Should they be fired, the cost to the city would be upwards of \$3 million.

Albert Robles is one of those protected. While he was voted out of office as city treasurer, he did not lose his additional job as deputy city manager. He has been placed on administrative leave but, as required by contracts, continues to receive some \$11,000 a month. He

also continues to use city cellular phones and to drive city vehicles. If he is fired, the city will have to pay him some \$200,000. Although recently convicted for violating a California gun law, Robles is by no means down for the count. He will be back, if not in South Gate then in another California town that is on its way to becoming a Mexican village. ■

Roger D. McGrath is an historian in California and the author of Gunfighters, Highwaymen and Vigilantes, among other books.

Getting it Half Right

America's military prowess is better suited to making war than to building democracy.

By Jack Strocchi

THERE IS MUCH TALK about America's new role as an imperial state with the power to remake Iraq, and by extension the Middle East, into a democracy. As UPI analyst Steve Sailer says, there are only two problems with the hawks' scenario:

- the American people do not want to be the rulers of a global empire;
- the Rest of the World, especially Iraq, does not want to be the subject of U.S. imperialism.

Any doubts on this score were dispelled in the first week after the war. The endless stream of stories celebrating the safe homecoming of POWs and, by implication, the rest of the troops

reflected the dominant concern of most Americans. Far from plundering and occupying Iraq, Americans want to give the Iraqis money and get out. A *Washington Post* poll reported that most ranked attending to Iraq's humanitarian needs as the top U.S. priority. Seventy-three percent of Americans polled said "they are at least somewhat concerned about becoming bogged down in a peacekeeping mission in Iraq." This is not the attitude of an imperialist people seeking "a place in the sun."

Neoconservatives want to play a decisive role in the constitution of Iraq, but Iraq is their worst political nightmare: a sectarian, multicultural, anti-Israeli nation. There is no Iraqi consensus on the sharing of political power, mostly because Hussein destroyed all aspects

of Iraqi civil society apart from the rump Kurdish minority and the politicized Islamic fundamentalists.

Most Iraqis are equally opposed to becoming subjects of U.S. imperium. So Iraq is a microcosm of the Middle East, a

Iraqi Shi'ites seem to be testing out the American will to impose force. The *New York Times* reported, "[A]dministration officials have been surprised by the ferocity of the anti-American sentiments being voiced in some quarters of

want grassroots consultation and international multilateral legitimization of the process.

The American people, like the pigeons, do not want to hang around building the Iraqi nation for too long. But this rapid exit strategy conflicts with the hawks' Japanese/German model of democracy promotion. In those states, military occupations lasted seven and ten years respectively.

In practice, the pigeons do not care that much about process as long as it is short and cheap. So the debate reduces to hawks versus doves. The Pentagon's hawkish U.S.-exotic policy of imported exiles vies with the dovish State Department's Iraqi-nativist policy that relies on homegrown leaders. The doves' policy will increase Iraqi legitimacy but allow Shi'ite fundamentalists to get more power thereby defeating a key strategic aim of the U.S.—terrorist inhibition. The hawks' aim—the increase of U.S. power, never mind the expense of Iraqi legitimacy—defeats the other key political aim of democracy promotion.

Most observers side with the doves. They believe that U.S. unilateralism, while effective in military terms, cannot work in the political arena.

Pigeons in the administration believe that Iraq's postwar reconstruction will be mostly self-financing. Iraq has "a huge financial base from within upon which to draw... because of their oil wealth," noted White House spokesman Ari Fleischer. But to get that wealth out of the ground, the U.S. has to raise Iraq's oil output from its current 2.5 million barrels per day output to 3 million. This would require a \$5 billion investment, and Iraq has no creditworthiness, as it owes more than \$60 billion.

The Gulf War cost \$76 billion, about one percent of GDP, mostly paid for by the Saudis. This war, Bush requested \$75 billion, but much of this pays for the prosecution of the war (\$15 billion) and

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DO NOT WANT TO HANG AROUND BUILDING THE IRAQI NATION FOR TOO LONG.

gorgeous mosaic of embittered Revolutionaries, embattled Reformers, and empowered Reactionaries.

There are the failed fascists in the Iraqi center—the secularized Sunni Ba'athists in Baghdad—just as there are fascists running America's latest Middle Eastern enemy: Syria. Since the *Fedayeen* have so far not made a nuisance of themselves, it appears that Operation Iraqi Freedom has destroyed Ba'athism as an effective political force in Iraq.

There are the aspiring freedom-lovers in the Iraqi north—the Kurdish Democratic Party in Mosul. Operation Iraqi Freedom has strengthened the hand of these forces, but they are still in the minority.

Then there are the rampant Reactionary fundamentalists in the Iraqi south—the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution (SCIR) in Basra—just as there are fundamentalists across the whole of the Middle East: Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iran, Yemen, etc.

The philosopher John Gray has remarked that the choice of regimes in the Middle East is not a choice between secular dictatorship and secular democracy but between secular dictatorship and Islamic democracy. So the question is whether the Iraqi Shi'ites will follow the Ayatollah Khomeini's model of government or the more secular version being promoted by moderate Iranian Shi'ites.

Iraq." One administration official admitted, "We're flying a little blind here."

A leading Shi'ite political cleric, Abdul Aziz Hakim, deputy head of the SCIR, says, "The American presence is unacceptable, and there's no justification for it staying in Iraq." There was one pro-American Shi'ite cleric, Abdel Majid Al-Khoei, but on April 10 he made the mistake of announcing his pro-American sympathies and was promptly murdered by the mob. The Council on Foreign Relations says that the attitudes of "the remaining leaders appears to range from wariness about U.S. intentions to virulent opposition."

The Bush administration as a whole wants a short and cheap occupation, one part democracy-promoting political reformation and one part nation-building technical reconstruction. But it is split on the best mode of political change for Iraq:

- Pigeons in the White House (e.g., President Bush) with a homing instinct want to minimize American exposure while wanting a tyrant like Saddam Hussein out of Iraq.
- Hawks in the Pentagon (e.g., Secretary Rumsfeld) want to promote U.S. hegemony over the Middle East and prefer the unilateral imposition of the Iraqi National Congress.
- Doves in the State Department (e.g., Secretary Powell) support a UN administered welfare state in Iraq and

the upkeep of the 75,000 occupation troops (\$20 billion *per annum*). And nation-building technical reconstruction will not come cheap. William Nordhaus, a Yale economist, estimates the war could eventually cost anything from \$100 billion to \$1 trillion plus depending on the regional oil and security fall out. The U.S. will have to provide massive financial assistance, as Iraq cannot simultaneously fund its own industrial reconstruction, pay off foreign debts,

message that the old guard is truly finished." The Machiavellian hand of the neocons was in evidence here. Tolerance of looting was endorsed, if not planned, to intimidate former Ba'athist officials and perhaps encourage a score-settling bloodbath in lieu of a purge. The *Washington Post* quoted Richard Perle as saying, "The Iraqis know who their oppressors are in their midst. It isn't Robespierre, I hope. But it's up to the Iraqis, and there is bound to be score settling."

TOLERANCE OF LOOTING WAS ENDORSED, IF NOT PLANNED, TO INTIMIDATE FORMER BA'ATHIST OFFICIALS AND PERHAPS ENCOURAGE A SCORE-SETTLING BLOODBATH IN LIEU OF A PURGE.

and lift the standard of living to a level above that which requires looting as a form of income supplement.

The administration's first field test in Iraqi democracy-promotion was its tacit incitement to mobocracy. On Day 1 of Regime Change, riots and looting broke out in Baghdad while U.S. troops stood by and did nothing. Ignorance was not an excuse. The administration was aware of the risk of looting and vandalism to antiquities well before the war started. The *Washington Post* reported that "Late in January, a mix of scholars, museum directors, art collectors and antiquities dealers asked for and were granted a meeting at the Pentagon to discuss their misgivings. [They] peppered Defense Department officials with e-mail reminders in the weeks before the war began."

There is some evidence that coalition tolerance of looters was a deliberate act of policy commission, rather than of administrative omission, intended to facilitate the regime change in the Iraqi power structure. The *London Times* reported one senior British officer saying, "We believe this sends a powerful

Despite the opening blemishes, the neocons have earned the right to a little gloating. The war did not result in military catastrophe or political meltdown.

- It was prosecuted rapidly and according to plan. R.W. Apple's quagmire predictions were wrong; Rumsfeld's prediction of "six days to six weeks" was mean-accurate.
- Coalition military casualties were minimal. Barry McCaffrey opined, "[The coalition] could take, bluntly, a couple to 3,000 casualties." Instead, we incurred 165 fatalities.
- Iraq suffered low-range civilian and military casualties. The International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War predicted a range of between 48,000 and 260,000 civilians and combatant fatalities. In fact, the Iraq Body Count puts civilian fatalities between 1,930 and 2,377. The Pentagon has not revealed the Iraqi military fatality toll, but it is unlikely to top 15,000, the scholarly consensus for Iraqi military deaths in the first Gulf War.
- Public infrastructure was not subjected to scorched earth or saturation

bombing. Bridges were captured intact, and utilities were not bombed beyond quick repair

- Humanitarian disasters did not overcome Iraq's cities. Though public services were seriously disrupted, there were no mass outbreaks of disease or starvation.
 - Mass exodus of refugees did not occur. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees was preparing for a flood of as many as 600,000 refugees. It now plans to help up to half a million Iraqis currently living in other countries return to Iraq.
 - Large numbers of oil wells were not torched. Hussein ignited 788 Kuwaiti oil wells in the first Gulf War, but only 11 of Iraq's 1,500 oil wells burned this time.
 - The Arab Street did not rise. Arab League Secretary General Amr Mussa was sure that the coalition had "miscalculated ... they are going to let the genie out of the jar ... The day Baghdad falls, is the beginning of the real war." No Arab government was overthrown by a popular uprising, although the Arab League was split over attitudes to the U.S.
 - Islamic jihadists were not able to start a Lebanon-style reign of urban terror. Suicide bombing inflicted fewer than ten coalition casualties.
 - Weapons of Mass Destruction were not used against the coalition or its regional allies. Despite warnings that the use of ballistic missiles to attack Israel could trigger a wider regional conflict, Special Forces were able to neutralize that threat.
- American war planners have reason to boast. The U.S. is getting better at regime change: six months for Gulf War I, three months for Kosovo, and three weeks for Gulf War II. One can only hope for similar success at nation-building. ■

Jack Strocchi is a writer in Australia.

Making the Middle East Safe— for Bin Laden

Are Wolfowitz and Perle the terror master's agents of influence?

By Martin Sieff

A TYRANNICAL BUT SECULAR and stable regime has been toppled in Iraq. The Syrians with good reason fear they are next. And an extraordinary campaign of calumny continues against the Saudis: The Bush administration's policy towards the Middle East is one that was inconceivable when it took office less than two and a half years ago.

Underlying the other apparent motives, such as control of oil and support for Israel, lies a more ambitious, and almost eschatological, vision. It is revealed in a phrase that has become beloved of neo-conservatives and those who fancy themselves tough *realpolitik* analysts of the post-9/11 world. That phrase is "draining the swamp." The predominantly Arab Muslim nations of the Middle East must be remade as democracies to "drain the swamp" of the anti-Western—especially anti-American and anti-Israeli—hatreds that seethe within them. Only this way will the enormous, and growing, popular support Osama bin Laden and his heirs enjoy be dissipated. So goes the argument.

But like so many general explanations for more complex processes, this policy is not only wrong, it is also guaranteed to produce the exact opposite of what it promises. Far from "draining the swamp," it is systematically demolishing the dikes that hold back the most ferocious passions of anti-Western extremism that would otherwise remain contained.

The evidence for this is already apparent in Iraq, only weeks after the downfall of Saddam Hussein's regime. The *Washington Post* noted on April 23 that both State Department and Pentagon officials were astonished at the vast popularity, fervor, and organization the Shi'ite majority in southern Iraq had already exhibited less than three weeks after the collapse of the Ba'ath government. The story carried the all-too-revealing title, "U.S. Planners Surprised by Strength of Iraqi Shiites." The authors began by reporting, "Bush administration officials say they underestimated the Shiites' organizational strength and are unprepared to prevent the rise of an anti-American Islamic fundamentalist government in the country."

recognizing that other approaches may be necessary.

On April 25, Daniel Pipes, director of the Middle East Forum, circulated an article he wrote that argued, "Iraq needs a democratically-minded Iraqi strongman." For the United States must prevent the Iraqi people, or at least the Shi'ite majority of them, from saying "Yes to Islam," or "Yes to Iranian-style militant Islam." Therefore, some secular Iraqi dictator ruthless enough to prevent such a takeover is now required.

Well, of course, until April 9 this year, the Iraqis had such a ruler. His name was Saddam Hussein.

The enthusiastic support for virulently anti-American forms of Islam now sweeping southern Iraq is not unique to

FAR FROM "DRAINING THE SWAMP," WE ARE SYSTEMATICALLY DEMOLISHING THE DIKES THAT HOLD BACK THE MOST FEROCIOUS PASSIONS OF ANTI-WESTERN EXTREMISM THAT WOULD OTHERWISE REMAIN CONTAINED.

"Surprised"? "Underestimated"? "Unprepared"? What do we pay these people their six-figure salaries for?

What is the new neoconservative prescription for this phenomenon that none of them appears to have anticipated—though many others among us clearly did? True-believing neocons still recite the mantra of full democracy in Iraq. Some wiser heads, however, are already

Shi'ites, as many neoconservative pundits have already opined.

Neil MacFarquhar wrote a piece in the *New York Times* on April 13 headlined, "Humiliation and Rage Stalk the Arab World." And the Arabs are predominantly Sunni, not Shi'ite. The title of a companion piece by Alan Cowell—"A Tyrant Disappears, So Who Feels Safe?"—had a particularly eerie resonance,

appearing as it did only four days after Saddam's regime collapsed.

Saddam has indeed been ousted. Syrian President Bashar Assad may be next in line for the same treatment. And the amazing barrage of Saudi-bashing on the mainstream op-ed pages of the U.S. media has already risen to its old post-9/11 stridency. But will this really make us safer, as Cowell rightly asked? Will it disperse, or only further intensify, the humiliation and rage sweeping the Arab world that MacFarquhar documented? And if the Iraqi people are indeed given the freedom to choose their own rulers, as President Bush so movingly promised them, how can one doubt that they will immediately raise up leaders who hate him—and us?

Yet the ideologically driven neoconservative push to “drain the swamp” of the Middle East by pursuing regime change throughout shows no sign of diminishing. Who, then is in position to profit from this destruction or mortal weakening of secular or moderate governments throughout the region? Not the American people or the national interests of the U.S. That is for sure. Not Israel either. It is notable that Israeli officials have been signaling recently that they do not favor “regime change” in Syria, since they recognize that the only credible alternative government there would come from the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood—a natural ally for bin Laden if ever there were one.

Who then does stand to benefit from current U.S. policy? Who else but the man who most wants to see the current governments of the Middle East destroyed so that he can proclaim the New Caliphate and True *Jihad* against the West? None other than bin Laden himself.

We already see that the dethroning of Saddam—for so long relentlessly urged by Richard Perle, Paul Wolfowitz, and their acolytes—has served to unleash Islamic fundamentalism throughout

Iraq. And there is no reason to doubt that the discrediting or toppling of the governments of Syria and Saudi Arabia will do the same.

Are Perle and Wolfowitz, therefore, deliberately acting as bin Laden's Agents of Influence? Presumably not, yet it is hard to argue otherwise, as they are so obviously doing what he wants. At the very least, they are repeating the catastrophic error of Jimmy Carter a quarter century ago when he undercut the Shah of Iran by urging democratization on him, only to get instead—Ayatollah Khomeini.

It would be a disaster for America, the

West, and Israel too, for that matter, if the current weak and corrupt governments that run most of the Middle East were to be overthrown. For it is bin Laden and his ilk that would sweep in to reap the rewards, just as they have begun to do in Iraq.

This cannot happen unless the power of the United States is deliberately mobilized to undermine the region's major governments. Yet that is exactly what is now happening. The Middle East is being made safe all right. But not for us. ■

Martin Sieff is Chief International Analyst for United Press International.

Missile Defense Bait and Switch

Protecting the homeland or building the empire?

By Charles V. Peña

PRESIDENT BUSH ANNOUNCED last December that the United States would deploy a missile defense by 2004. The plan calls for deploying ten ground-based interceptors at Fort Greely, Alaska in 2004 and another ten in 2005 or 2006. But this initial deployment is a phantom missile defense rather than a functional military system providing any meaningful protection for the American public.

The ground-based midcourse system is still in a test and evaluation phase. Eight tests have been conducted, five of which have been considered successful by the military. So even under artificial test conditions, the system is only about 60 percent effective. More realistic tests

(including against decoys and other countermeasures) need to be done before being able to make any hard conclusions about whether such a system is operationally effective and reliable against real missiles. Indeed, the Pentagon Office of Operational Test and Evaluation states that the system “has yet to demonstrate significant operational capability.”

The latest scare fueling the rush to deploy missile defense is CIA Director George Tenet's affirmative response when asked on Capitol Hill whether North Korea currently has a missile capable of hitting the West Coast of the United States. The doomsayers were quick to proclaim that Americans are

defenseless against the dire threat posed by North Korea's two nuclear warheads.

Never mind that the United States has an arsenal of 6,000 nuclear warheads that serve as a credible and effective deterrent against any nuclear power. And what Tenet did not say is the missile he referred to, the Taepodong-II, was flight-tested in 1998, an event that was widely reported and is therefore not news. Although that flight-test demonstrated that the North Koreans have the technical know-how to build a three-stage rocket that could fly intercontinental distances, they did not actually fly the third stage, have not conducted any subsequent flight tests, and—most importantly—have not deployed a functional and operational military system.

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So the threat to the United States is postulated rather than real.

The truth is that missile defense is not really about defending America *per se*. Indeed, the administration's missile defense program is ultimately to develop

THE ADMINISTRATION SEES **SHORT-RANGE MISSILES**, LIKE SCUDS, THAT DO NOT THREATEN THE UNITED STATES AS THE **MORE REAL THREAT**.

a global system to defend U.S. forces, friends, and allies (many of whom are wealthy enough to pay for their own missile defense) against ballistic missiles of all ranges. In fact, short-range missiles like Scuds that do not threaten the United States are probably seen as the more real threat. Why? Because if they are equipped with nuclear, biological, or chemical warheads, such missiles could serve as a deterrent to profligate U.S. military intervention with conventional forces around the world.

To be sure, a truly national limited land-based missile defense, which is thoroughly and realistically tested, designed to protect the U.S. homeland, is an appropriate insurance policy against the potential rogue state threat, as well as against accidental and unauthorized launches. But pursuing an expansive global missile defense would not only be expensive (probably well in excess of \$100 billion on top of more than \$100 billion already spent) and technically difficult and complex—building any missile defense system will be the most technically complex and challenging weapon system ever—but downright dangerous.

No weapon system is 100 percent perfect, and missile defense will not be any different. Therefore, no missile defense system can guarantee that all attacking warheads will be destroyed. As a result, a global missile defense may provide a false sense of security by creating per-

ceived protection for the United States to operate with relative impunity throughout the world. If policymakers are willing to take pre-emptive military action overseas, adversaries armed with long-range missiles and WMD may feel they

have nothing to lose by launching an attack against the United States. Given a less than perfect missile defense, the possibility of a warhead getting through would be real. Thus a potentially catastrophic attack on U.S. soil (a failure of the first magnitude in U.S. national security policy) could result directly from unneeded U.S. military action against a country that would not have attacked the United States if it had been left alone.

It would seem that the Bush administration has successfully duped the American public about missile defense with classic "bait and switch" tactics. In contrast to a more affordable limited land-based system, the global missile defense sought by the administration is not about defending America. It is a naked shield for a quixotic crusade using military force to build a safer and better world based on American values. But this strategy will have the perverse effect of making the United States less secure because it will sow the seeds of hate and anti-American sentiment under the guise of expanding liberty. Such actions could result in recruiting more terrorists and terrorist violence. And missile defense, no matter how effective, will not protect Americans from enemies using easier and cheaper means to inflict mass casualties—witness 9/11. ■

Charles V. Peña is director of defense policy studies at the Cato Institute.

Arts & Letters

FILM

[A Mighty Wind]

The Times They A' Changed

By Steve Sailer

"A MIGHTY WIND" is another fake showbiz documentary in the lineage sired by the immortal "This Is Spinal Tap." Christopher Guest, who starred in that 1984 comedy as Nigel Tufnel, a thick-as-a-brick heavy metal guitarist, revived its semi-improvised format for his 1996 community theater spoof "Waiting for Guffman" and 2000's shaggy dog show satire "Best in Show."

"A Mighty Wind" gently parodies some washed-up remnants of the 1960s folk music boom as they regroup to put on a show for public television to honor the late impresario Irving Steinbloom (modeled on real life folk mogul Albert Grossman).

Guest, an English nobleman more formally known as the fifth Baron Haden-Guest of Saling, consistently wins critical accolades for his deadpan lampoons. The intrinsic box office limitation of Guest's mockumentaries, however, is that they are funniest to lovers of documentaries. And those folks don't tend to get out to the megaplex on Saturday night much because that's when their favorite PBS station airs pledge-week concerts starring Art Garfunkel.

Fortunately, Guest's films don't cost much to make, and they generate good word of mouth. Despite the expert comic timing of Guest's troupe of fifty-something actors, his films' lines sound

best when your friends repeat them to you.

"A Mighty Wind" reunites Guest with his Spinal Tap band-mates Michael McKean (Lenny from "Laverne and Shirley") and Harry Shearer (17 characters on "The Simpsons"). This time they're The Folksmen, a cheery singing trio hoping for a comeback after 30 years.

A debate over whether to wear their old flannel shirts on stage gets them entangled in inane Spinal-Tap-style epistemological meanderings: "The costumes are retro now, but they weren't retro then. They were 'nowtro.'" Catherine O'Hara, the queen of Toronto's famed 1970s "SCTV" show, plays one half of a long-defunct romantic duo. Eugene Levy, another SCTV alum and Guest's writing partner, portrays her quasi-catatonic ex-partner. Levy's popularity is peaking at age 57 with his scene-stealing turn in "Bringing Down the House" as the lawyer with the darker-the-berry-the-sweeter-the-juice philosophy.

"A Mighty Wind" frequently touches on the curious demographics of folk music. Although early 1960s folkies prided themselves on their authenticity as they strummed Scots-Irish hillbilly tunes, the genre, like PBS and NPR today, appealed most to East Coast Jews and Great Lakes Gentiles. Bob Dylan, a Jew born in Duluth, was the perfect hybrid.

As Steinbloom's son, tiny Bob Balaban, once again portraying a Jewish entertainment executive, has a memorable scene setting up the broadcast with big, blonde Ed Begley Jr. He plays the folk-loving manager of an NYC public television station who speaks in a strangely appropriate Swedish-Yiddish patois: "Yah, yah, that's meshuggah!"

Oddly, top comedians have tended to come from similar locales at least since the debut of "Saturday Night Live" and

"SCTV" in the mid-1970s. With the Second City improv troupes in Toronto and Chicago functioning as farm teams, this Great Lakes influence has become pervasive in comedy.

Guest and Levy let veterans like Fred Willard (doing another of his jolly jerks) improvise. To keep the story (and budget) on track, though, they carefully structure what can happen within each scene.

"A Mighty Wind's" restraint is admirable. For example, the uncomfortable ex-lovers are primarily based on the obscure Canadian duo Ian & Sylvia, when they could have gone for the easy yuks by modeling them on a reunion of Cher and Sonny Bono or of Dylan and Joan Baez.

Still, they pay the price for their tastefulness by harvesting more chuckles than laughs. The fundamental problem with "A Mighty Wind" as satire is that it's too humane toward its victims. While the dim vulgarity of Spinal Tap's rockers—"These go to eleven"—made them ready targets, the fatal flaw of the folkies was their dweebiness. The filmmakers, though, are now too mature to find low testosterone levels adequate inspiration for Swiftian outrage.

As a story, "A Mighty Wind" suffers from lack of conflict. Levy should have played a Dylan character, a superstar who condescends to appear, having forgotten how much he is bitterly resented by the other musicians for outmoding folk music when he switched to electric guitar rock in 1965. Dylan is a man so ambitious for adulation that he's wasted a good part of his life trying to become a movie star despite possessing no screen charisma whatsoever, as proven again by "Masked & Anonymous," Dylan's new and strangely similar ensemble film about a benefit concert. When The Beatles arrived, Dylan realized that acoustic

music was inherently the wrong horse to ride to superstardom.

Folk was too communal. Hip young Americans didn't want to sing along with their fellow citizens anymore. They wanted to express their individuality by having a handful of vastly wealthy celebrities do their singing for them.

It's hard not to sympathize with Guest's sympathy for his beaten-down folkies. ■

Rated PG-13 for sex-related humor.
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BOOKS

[*World on Fire: How Exporting Free Market Democracy Breeds Ethnic Violence and Global Instability*, Amy Chua, Doubleday, 340 pages]

Minority Report

By John Derbyshire

WE ARE, THE PUNDITS tell us, living in an age characterized by globalization and democracy. People and capital move ever more freely across national boundaries, while rulers everywhere are more and more obliged to pay attention to the desires of their citizens. The common opinion in the United States, propagated by the big-ticket media, the educational system, and the political establishment, is that both globalization and democracy are wonderful things that will liberate human energies and vanquish ancient rancors.

Well, here comes Amy Chua to explain that over a large part of the Earth's surface, globalization and democracy are at loggerheads and may actually be incompatible. Chua, who is a professor at Yale Law School, knows whereof she speaks. Her family comes from the small but wealthy Chinese minority of the Philippines. Globalization has been very good indeed for that

minority, opening up great new opportunities for them to practice their entrepreneurial skills and allowing them to network more easily with the overseas-Chinese commercial classes in other countries. It has probably benefited non-Chinese Filipinos, too, but not nearly as much. Seen from the viewpoint of that majority, globalization has permitted the Chinese to soar up into a stratosphere of stupendous wealth, leaving ordinary Filipinos farther behind than ever. Now invite that sullen, resentful majority to practice democracy, and what do you think will happen? Prof. Chua knows. Her wealthy aunt in the Philippines was murdered by her own chauffeur, and the local police—native Filipinos—have not the slightest interest in apprehending the killer. In their report on the incident, under “motive for murder,” they wrote the single word: *Revenge*.

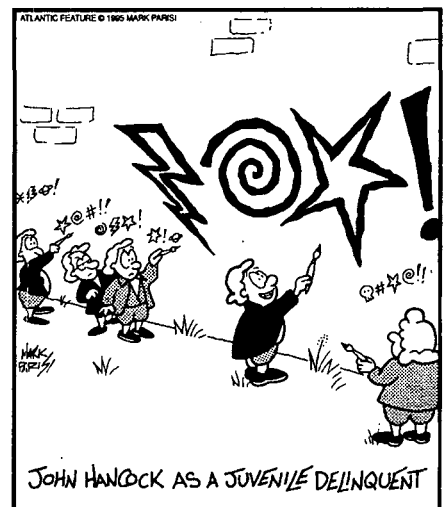
The key phrase in this book is “market-dominant minority.” The Chinese of the Philippines (and of Burma, Thailand, Indonesia, and several other places) are a market-dominant minority. So, though for considerably different reasons, are the whites of southern Africa, the Indians of East Africa, the Lebanese of West Africa, and the Eritreans of Ethiopia; so are the tall, pale-skinned elites of Latin America (except for those few countries whose indigenes were completely exterminated by the European conquerors). So were the Slovenes and Croats of Yugoslavia, the Tutsi of Rwanda, the Jews of Weimar Germany ... You get the picture. For all kinds of reasons, some the consequence of blatant injustice, some arising from temporary civilizational advantage, some from mere historical or geographical accidents, some the result of factors that may not be mentioned in polite society, all over the world there are wealthy and powerful outsider minorities imbedded in large populations of native “sons of the soil.”

The problem does not afflict societies only at the national level. It can be local, as with the Korean storekeepers in American inner cities. It can be supranational, as with the Israelis in the Middle East. Perhaps it can even be global:

Prof. Chua develops a theory of anti-Americanism based on the concept of us as a market-dominant minority in the world at large. I think she got a little carried away with her idea there, but her analysis of anti-Americanism is no less plausible than some others I have seen. At any rate, she makes a solid case for her thesis at the national level and gives convincing and up-to-date explanations of phenomena like the triumph of Hugo Chavez in Venezuela and the seven billionaire “oligarchs” of Yeltsin's Russia. (Six of them were Jewish.)

One possible, but non-democratic, strategy for a nation with a market-dominant minority is “crony capitalism.” A small clique, often military, of native sons goes into league with the minority, enriching themselves and their relatives, taking the edge off majority resentment by hiding minority dominance behind an ethnonationalist façade, staffing political positions, opening the economy to global markets while keeping democracy firmly at bay, sometimes admitting old non-entrepreneurial landed gentry classes in on the racket, as Marcos did with the Spanish-blood *hacendados* in the Philippines. Suharto of Indonesia was a grand master of the “crony capitalism” game until his overthrow in 1998, as was Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya. The outstanding current instance is the horrible SLORC dictatorship in Burma.

Suharto's downfall was followed by anti-Chinese riots, with much destruc-



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tion and killing. Hundreds of Chinese-Indonesians suffered the fate of Tutsis, Weimar Jews, Zimbabwean farmers, and other victims of democracy. This is the downside of being a market-dominant minority. It is astonishing, reading Chua's case studies, how courageous and resilient some of these entrepreneurial minorities are. Landing in a strange country, they open little stores or set off alone into the bush as peddlers. After decades of hardship and risk, they attain wealth and, via crony capitalism or imperial patronage, some measure of power. Then comes the democratic backlash. They are killed and raped, their stores are burned, the survivors flee. Then, a year or two later, they are back—trading, peddling, dealing, bargaining, painstakingly building up again what was burned down. Speaking as a person with no commercial abilities whatsoever, I am in awe of these market-dominant minorities. And yet, of course, on the other hand, speaking as a person with no commercial abilities whatsoever, I find it all too easy to under-

philanthropy for the benefit of the majority. I thought I sensed a lack of conviction here, though—justified, in my opinion. Ethnonationalism is a very powerful force. It has always been underestimated, but never more so than now, when elite dogma in the civilized world insists that ethnicity is at most a cosmetic “lifestyle” to be “celebrated,” at the least a complete fiction, a “social construct.” One would like to ask the charred Chinese corpses of Jakarta or the heaps of severed Tutsi heads and limbs in Rwanda, what they think of this theory ... but of course they cannot tell us.

Amy Chua brings a wonderful breadth of knowledge to her book. There is hardly a corner of the world she has not looked into, scarcely an entrepreneurial minority she has missed. (Though the Hakka of Southeast China are conspicuous by their absence. During the confrontation across the Taiwan strait in 1996, a Taiwanese colleague muttered to me that it was “a fight between two old Hakkas.” Both Lee Teng-hui, at that time President of Taiwan, and Deng Xiaop-

ETHNONATIONALISM IS A VERY POWERFUL FORCE. IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN UNDERESTIMATED, BUT NEVER MORE SO THAN NOW.

stand the resentments that build up against them among “sons of the soil.” Amy Chua gives a very telling quote from one of the latter, Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia: “*If we don't know how to work well or do business, at least we know how to fight well!*” (Author's italics.)

Is there any way out of this ugly antithesis of globalization-strengthened minority commercial dominance versus democracy-strengthened mass ethnonationalist resentment? The author offers some suggestions. Aggressive, forced assimilation of the minority into majority culture has been attempted, in Thailand for example, but with much injustice and only mixed success. A better prospect is enhanced social awareness on the part of the minority—a voluntary renunciation of objectionable practices like child labor, together with large-scale

ing, then—though at that point highly theoretically—still supreme leader of mainland China, came from Hakka families. Perhaps Prof. Chua's own people are Hakka and she is practicing a form of market-dominant minority camouflage.) She seems to have mastered even the trickiest minority-within-minority and minority-versus-minority cases, like that of the Ashkenazim in Israel or the Kikuyu of Kenya. I am normally very skeptical of sociological TOEs (that is, Theories of Everything), but this one got my attention. I just hope the prognosis for humanity is more hopeful than the book's rather lame closing prescriptions. ■

John Derbyshire is a Contributing Editor of National Review. His new book is Prime Obsession.

[*A Story of America First: The Men and Women Who Opposed U.S. Intervention in World War II*, Ruth Sarles, Praeger, 238 pages]

The Last Word on America First

By Justin Raimondo

1940 WAS A fateful year. War loomed large in the American future. Yet no debate was heard from the two major party presidential candidates who were both interventionists. The campaign “was conducted,” wrote *Saturday Evening Post* editorialist Garet Garrett, wonderingly, “as if for more than a year isolationists and interventionists had not been locked in mortal struggle. To intervene or not to intervene? Did the people vote on that? No. That question”—among many others—“was avoided.”

The parallels are haunting. Does anyone remember voting on whether to invade Iraq and take charge of 25 million new dependents? No doubt all too many readers voted for a “humble” foreign policy, as George W. Bush promised during the presidential debates. Instead, they got one born of hubris.

Roosevelt, many Republicans were convinced, was using the war scare to divert attention from the failure of the New Deal and to increase the power of the executive branch beyond anything yet dreamed. Yet the GOP was oddly quiescent. This lack of an effective opposition party led to the creation, in a very short time, of the biggest antiwar movement in American history.

The America First Committee was founded, too, because of the abdication of the Left, which joined the War Party when Hitler invaded the Soviet Union. In the face of these serial betrayals, the job of keeping us out of the biggest mass slaughter in human history was left to a group of anti-New-Deal businessmen, retired military officers, and college students of a conservative disposition.

The AFC was founded on Sept. 4, 1940, two days after Garrett's election-eve lament saw print. For years its true history has been buried beneath a mound of interventionist propaganda, but now we have an inside account from the woman who served as the AFC's congressional liaison. *A Story of America First*, by Ruth Sarles, with an invaluable introduction by Bill Kauffman, recaptures a lost chapter in the history of the American Right, one that teaches conservatives important lessons for today.

Kauffman's introduction is full of information, anecdotes, and local color: it also sent me running to my dictionary a few times then racing back to read more. He defends the America Firsters from the smear artists, then and now, who tried to tar the committee and its leaders with the stain of racial and religious bigotry. With deft strokes of biographical color, he highlights the broad ideological diversity of a group that could encompass Socialist Party presidential candidate Norman Thomas and Gen. Thomas E. Wood, chief executive of Sears and Roebuck.

Kauffman, author of a previous volume entitled *America First!*, a biographical compendium of Old Right contrarians and undeservedly obscure literary figures, shines brightest in the Appendix, entitled "Who Were the America Firsters?" These concise portraits of individuals who campaigned for the cause—

including Kathleen Norris, the popular San Francisco novelist who was the Danielle Steele of her era—are Kauffman at his best. Particularly fascinating is his analysis of the novels of AFC activist Janet Ayer Fairbank as emblematic of the Middle American populist spirit. The profiles of Frederick J. Libby,

abandoned because "the Department of Justice and the Democratic Party have made it clear in the first nine months of the war that opposition to the administration foreign policy before the country went to war is now subject to charges of lack of patriotism and worse as [if] it had been expressed [in] wartime."

KAUFFMAN DEFENDS THE AMERICA FIRSTERS FROM THE **SMEAR ARTISTS**, THEN AND NOW, WHO **TRIED TO TAR** THE COMMITTEE AND ITS LEADERS WITH THE STAIN OF **RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY**.

head of the mainstream peace group of the time, the National Council for the Prevention of War, along with Jeanette Rankin, representing the Left, and the "warriors for peace" such as Gen. Wood, a West Pointer, and Col. Hanford MacNider, former American Legion national commander and Hoover's assistant secretary of war, are studies in contrast and unexpected comity.

The latter group definitely predominated in the leadership of America First, whose official creed, which prefaces this volume, started out, "I believe in an impregnable national defense." There is also a definitely Buchananesque lilt to "I believe we should keep our country out of the Old World's everlasting family quarrels. Our fathers came to America because they were sick of them. Let's not stick our necks back into them." We cannot expect Europe and Asia to fight our battles: "No nation will survive which depends on another to fight its battles."

There is a certain subdued tone in Sarles's work. Yet the reasons for her reticence are all too apparent in the opening words of her introduction, which overlay the rest of the book like a thin film of fear: "This story of the America First Committee has been written in the months immediately following the attack on Pearl Harbor," she writes. "When it will see the light of day in book form events will have to determine." Publication, even in a limited edition, has been

Hollywood's antiwar crowd, which is now complaining about being blacklisted, may find it consoling to know that Lillian Gish, the famous silent screen star, suffered the same fate when she agreed to speak from the America First platform. As Kauffman shows, the anti-isolationist blacklist extended throughout the artistic and literary world, ensnaring William Saroyan, Oswald Garrison Villard, and the poet Robinson Jeffers, among many others. The list included John T. Flynn, formerly a popular writer for the *New Republic* and *Colliers*, and Garrett, who was dismissed from the *Post* when war finally came.

Part of her aim, Sarles explains, is to recreate the "mental atmosphere" of the time, and this she does quite effectively, not by polemicizing but simply by reporting the long trail of contrived scandals, set-ups, and smear campaigns launched by a well-organized and lushly funded interventionist minority.

In the course of a narrative that often seems purely descriptive, Sarles develops a between-the-lines critique of her own: "If those who were against the war because they were anti-New Deal, anti-big taxes, or even plain anti-Democratic Party ... had used their prestige, influence, and money to organize, while there was yet time, a strong public opinion without which a real antiwar congressional bloc could not function, there might have been no occasion for this story." The liberals, for their part,



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"assumed a virtual monopoly on expression of the antiwar view," she writes, "yet for the most part they were far more interested in keeping their records 'clean' on a wide range of social questions than in an expedient compromise for the sake of a strategic gain on the antiwar front." Like liberals of today, who hate SUVs more than imperialism, and who love Mumia more than world peace, the lefties of yesteryear helped to marginalize antiwar sentiment.

Then as now, the whole strategy of the War Party was to tar the anti-interventionist movement as an anti-Semitic fifth column. In this context, Kauffman's unconditional defense of the famous Des Moines speech made by America First leader Charles Lindbergh, in which he said, "The three most important groups who have been pressing this country toward war are the British, the Jewish, and the Roosevelt administration," is inadequate. "Greatly confusing the matter," Kauffman writes, "was the minor detail that Lindbergh was *right*: Jewish groups *were* solidly behind the push for war." [Emphasis in original.]

But so what? The question is what sort of social and political weight did such groups bring to bear on the debate? The answer is far less than, say, the Communist Party, which Lindbergh neglected to mention. He instead trained his fire on warmongers of "lesser importance," including "a number of capitalists" and Anglophile intellectuals.

Kauffman says that Flynn, who headed up the New York City chapter, "castigated" Lindbergh, but Flynn's critique is worth detailing. In a letter to Lindbergh, Flynn agreed that some Jewish leaders had crudely equated opposition to the war with anti-Semitism, and that making the war an ethnic issue was unwise—but he went on to point out that Lindbergh had done precisely that. Surely such people should be taken to task, said Flynn, "But this is a far different matter from going out upon the public platform and denouncing 'the Jews' as the war-makers. No man can do that without incurring the guilt of religious and racial intolerance."

Sarles, in her account of the Des Moines disaster, dutifully recorded the defense of Lindbergh that the National Committee elaborated to its own satisfaction, and then ruefully reports that the group issued a statement that had been "diluted to the point of weakness"—and far too late to do any good.

In editing down a 750-page manuscript left moldering for half a century, Kauffman notes his deletion of a chapter on the interventionist organizations, an omission that makes me wonder if they realized what they were up against. They thought that if they just got a lot of prominent people together, and wrapped themselves in the flag as tightly as possible, they would be shielded from charges of disloyalty. But character assassination came naturally to the Smear Bund, in John T. Flynn's apt phrase, as most of them were Stalinist sympathizers who believed in assassination as a matter of high principle. The inclusion of this omitted material might have helped us to understand, perhaps, why America First failed.

some 800,000-strong. Sarles puts major emphasis on the mass support for the AFC position on the war: Americans were as little persuaded then as they are now by the principle of pre-emptive war.

Sarles details the relentless attempt to associate the AFC with pro-Nazi sympathies, including a grand jury investigation involving the distribution of franked speeches by antiwar members of Congress and endless efforts to set the Committee up on phony charges of anti-Semitism.

In reviewing the record of this battle, in which John Flynn played a role that can only be described as heroic, the lesson one carries away is that the America Firsters were far too restrained and noble for their own good. When a pro-Communist group put out a scurrilous pamphlet labeling the AFC "the Nazi transmission belt," Gen. Woods decided to maintain a dignified silence. The War Party knew how to fight dirty, but America First took the high road—to certain defeat.

THE WAR PARTY KNEW HOW TO FIGHT DIRTY, BUT AMERICA FIRST TOOK THE HIGH ROAD—TO CERTAIN DEFEAT.

Sarles describes the philosophy, the organization, and the day-to-day workings of the broadest, most ideologically diverse movement in American history, one that spanned economic classes and philosophies, united in the traditional American aversion to foreign entanglements. She gives an overview of the AFC's dogged lobbying efforts, the fight against Lend-Lease, and the story of the Committee's origins in a small student group at Yale led by R. Douglas Stuart Jr., whose father was president of the Quaker Oats Company. Subsidized by such anti-interventionist stalwarts as Henry H. Regnery, father of Henry Regnery, the pioneer conservative book publisher, and friends of Gen. Woods, the AFC grew exponentially, until it was

The timely publication of this book underscores the absurdity of the claim that the heirs of the Old Right, who oppose the creation of an American empire in the Middle East, "aspire to reinvent conservative ideology," as one critic of the neoconservative persuasion recently put it. The conservative heroes of the America First generation, men and women such as Garrett, Flynn, and Sarles, are being rediscovered, and the authentic traditions of the American Right are becoming too well known to be denied. ■

Justin Raimondo is the editorial director of Antiwar.com and author of An Enemy of the State: The Life of Murray N. Rothbard.

[*Are Cops Racist?: How the War Against the Police Harms Black Americans*, Heather Mac Donald, Ivan R. Dee, 192 pages]

The Racial Profiling Myth

By Robert Stacy McCain

Fact: Blacks, who are about 12 percent of the population, commit nearly half of the murders in the United States.

Fact: Blacks account for 38 percent of those arrested for all violent crimes (homicide, aggravated assault, rape, and armed robbery).

Fact: Blacks also account for 40 percent of those arrested for car theft, 40 percent of arrests for prostitution, 32 percent of arrests for embezzlement, 35 percent of arrests for drug offenses, and 24 percent of arrests for sex offenses. (The only crime categories in which blacks were under-represented, according to the Justice Department report, "Crime in the United States 2001," were drunk driving and liquor law violations.)

Given these facts, it seems logical that law enforcement agencies, if they are to fight crime effectively, must target their investigations disproportionately toward blacks. If blacks commit crime at rates four to five times higher than whites, then blacks can expect a greater level of police scrutiny than whites.

Facts and logic apparently have little relevance, however, when the subject is race in America. Since 1999, when New Jersey's attorney general accused state troopers of discriminating against black motorists, the phrase "racial profiling" has joined "root causes" and "police brutality" in the liberal lexicon. Accusations of racism against cops often go unchallenged because anyone who denies such accusations risks charges of racism himself. Ask Daniel Flynn, who has been vilified for his "Cop Killer" exposé of leftist icon Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Heather Mac Donald steps boldly into this treacherous terrain, demonstrating

not only that racial profiling is a myth, but that anti-profiling efforts are part of a trend that threatens to undermine the gains that law enforcement has made in the past decade. From 1991 to 1999, she notes, violent crime in America fell by 25 percent. But the very effectiveness of the crusade against crime has prompted new complaints:

Before the 1990s the racial rap against cops was that they ignored crime in black neighborhoods. ... But the irony of contemporary policing is that cops today face the reverse dilemma: if they respond to inner-city residents' heartfelt call for protection, they may well leave themselves open to charges of racism. The mandates that have metastasized across the country, requiring police departments to record the race of every person they stop, search, or arrest, raise a presumption of bias against individual officers—or entire departments—if their stop-and-arrest data do not exactly mirror the racial composition of the local population.

This "presumption of bias" against police, combined with massive ignorance, explains the furor that erupted in New Jersey over racial profiling. "There is no question that racial profiling exists at some level," said Christine Todd Whitman, then governor of New Jersey, after the state's attorney general issued a report purporting to show that profiling was "real, not imagined."

According to the report, between 1994 and 1998, 53 percent of consent searches on the south end of the Jersey Turnpike involved black motorists. Because blacks are 14 percent of New Jersey's population, the attorney general believed—and convinced many Americans—that he had demonstrated the existence of police bias.

Mac Donald didn't buy it. The attorney general, she writes, "... simply assumes that 53 percent of black consent searches is too high. Compared with what? If blacks in fact carry drugs

at a higher rate than do whites, then this search rate merely reflects good law enforcement. If the police are now to be accused of racism every time they go where the crime is, that's the end of public safety."

Furthermore, the Jersey Turnpike is a major East Coast drug-trafficking route, and federal drug agencies have warned that "Jamaicans, Haitians, and black street gangs dominate the manufacture and distribution of crack," while blacks—including African and West Indian immigrants—also play major roles in the heroin traffic. If cops want to reduce the flow of hard drugs to New York City and points north, keeping a close eye on black motorists on the Jersey Turnpike makes sense.

Facing the hard-headed realities of crime is something liberals prefer to avoid. Too many innocent blacks are being arrested, they suggest, and too many white criminals are going free. This argument "is an insult to law enforcement and a prime example of the anti-police advocates' willingness to rewrite reality," Mac Donald writes. "Though it is hard to prove a negative—in this case, that there is not a large cadre of white drug lords operating in the inner cities—circumstantial evidence rebuts the activists' insinuation. Between 1976 and 1994, 64 percent of the homicide victims in drug turf wars were black. ... Sixty-seven percent of known perpetrators were also black."

The facts completely contradict the racial profiling myth. Mac Donald reports that one study discovered that blacks on the Jersey Turnpike were more likely to speed than other drivers. "It turns out that the police stop blacks more for speeding because they speed more. Race has nothing to do with it." But because that is "not a politically acceptable result," the Justice Department—which had been called in to investigate the profiling claims in New Jersey—refused to accept the study. "Everyone with a stake in the racial profiling myth, from the state attorney general to the ACLU to defense attorneys who have been getting drug dealers out of jail and

back on the streets by charging racism, is trying to minimize the significance of the findings."

Are Cops Racist? is a collection of essays (first published in *City Journal*, where Mac Donald is a contributing editor) united by the theme of race and crime. Mac Donald exposes the big lies behind the anti-cop hysteria following the 1999 police killing of Amadou Diallo. Most of those lies—not only in the Diallo case but also in several other stories told here—were aggressively promoted by the *New York Times*.

The Diallo killing was a horrible accident: cops were looking for a brutal serial rapist; Diallo resembled a description of the suspect; and the cops failed to follow proper tactics so that, when Diallo made a suspicious move, the officers were exposed and felt compelled to open fire, hitting Diallo 19 times. But the African immigrant's shooting was not motivated by racism, as the usual "activists" claimed, nor was it evidence of a greater level of violence by cops under Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani. Mac Donald observes that in 1993, the last year of the mayoralty of Democrat David Dinkins, the NYPD "made 266,313 arrests and killed 23 people, compared to 1998's 403,659 arrests and 19 people killed."

The facts, of course, did nothing to prevent celebrities like Susan Sarandon from parading down to police headquarters to be arrested in protests orchestrated by Al Sharpton.

As a New York writer for a New York journal, it is natural that Mac Donald concentrates on New-York-area stories. But some of her best reporting is found in her examination of the events surrounding the April 2001 race riot in Cincinnati. The spark that ignited that episode was the shooting of 19-year-old Timothy Thomas. At 2 a.m. one morning, Thomas spotted two cops and took off running. Mac Donald narrates:

Wanted on fourteen warrants for traffic offenses and for evading arrest, Thomas led the policemen on a chase through the narrow

alleys of Cincinnati's most drug-infested and violent neighborhood, Over-the-Rhine. ... Officer Steve Roach, hearing a radio alert about a fleeing suspect with fourteen warrants, joined the pursuit and came abruptly face-to-face with the nineteen-year-old in a dark alley. When Thomas appeared to reach for his waistband, Roach shot him once in the chest. Three days later Over-the-Rhine would be burning.

The riots, and the response to them, followed a pattern identified as "the riot ideology" by Fred Siegel in his masterful book, *The Future Once Happened Here*. A major part was played by Cincinnati's local Jesse Jackson wannabe (every major America city now has one), the Rev. Damon Lynch III. For months before the Thomas shooting, Lynch and other activists had inflamed black sentiment with the slogan "Thirteen black men," a slogan amended, after the Thomas killing and another police shooting in January 2001, to "Fifteen black men."

But of this toll of supposedly innocent men shot by cops, only four cases "raise serious questions about officer misjudgment and excessive force," Mac Donald says. Among these putative victims of police brutality, she notes, were an axe murderer, an armed robber who fled from police in a stolen car and unloaded his handgun at pursuing officers, and a 23-year-old career criminal who already had five felony convictions. One "victim" of police brutality dragged a black police officer to death in a car.

These facts were obscured as the riot ideology—the '60s liberal myth that black violence is a justifiable response to poverty and racial injustice—took hold in Cincinnati. In response to the riots, the city did not focus on improved police tactics and training to prevent future shootings but instead appointed a "community action" panel to "address the root causes of the recent unrest." Among these alleged root causes were "education and youth development, economic inclusion ... housing and neigh-

borhood development ... image and media" and "health care and human services." But when Mac Donald interviews ordinary black citizens in Over-the-Rhine, she finds that what they really want is to get the drug dealers and hoodlums off their streets.

Mac Donald calls attention to a reality too often overlooked in the rhetoric about crime and race: the law-abiding majority of black Americans who benefit most from vigilant police work. If blacks are disproportionately represented among the perpetrators of crime, they are likewise over-represented among the victims of crime. It is their children who suffer most when violent dope dealers are allowed to take over the streets of low-income neighborhoods. Understanding this reality, it is hard to feel anything but contempt for the race hustlers and media lackeys who portray cops as a menace to black citizens.

Heather Mac Donald has brought her prodigious talents to bear on a serious issue. With an aptitude for pithy put-downs and the telling statistic, her account of the dangerous intersection of race and crime is compelling.

And she is surely correct when she concludes, "Unless the country pulls back—and fast—from its scapegoating of the police, it will soon find the public safety gains of the last decade melting away." ■

Robert Stacy McCain is an assistant national editor for the Washington Times.



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Professor Taki's Syllabus

This is the best news since Bill Clinton got caught with his pants down: writing in the *New York Times* last month, the polymath Michiko Kakutani informs us that

President Bush has never been known as a bookworm. (A little learning is a very dangerous thing.) According to Kakutani, he is a gut politician—the best kind, as far as I'm concerned—a person who usually leaves the heavy reading to his wife Laura, a former librarian. Kakutani quotes the calumnious David Frum saying, "Conspicuous intelligence seemed actively unwelcome in the Bush White House." (Iago would say that, especially after he was fired.)

Never mind. As long as someone, anyone, reads, George W. Bush will be fine. The trouble, of course, is what his advisors are reading. Kakutani tells us that in this White House the array of writings are mostly written by neoconservative authors, which sounds a bit like a man trying to keep off the bottle who reads non-stop Henry Miller and F. Scott Fitzgerald. "The administration is driven in high degree by big and often abstract theories that promote a moral approach to foreign policy; an unembarrassed embrace of power," Kakutani writes.

This helps me at last to understand what the war in Iraq was all about. It was not about a serious military power threatening the United States, nor was it about Scuds, drones of death, dirty nukes, or chemical and biological weapons. Nor was it about Osama bin Laden. For all the death and destruction the war inflicted on Iraqis—the freedom of the people coming almost as an afterthought to Pentagon planners—it was about an abstract theory that promoted a moral approach to an unembarrassed

embrace of power. (Get it? Got it! Good!) Back to books.

According to the *Times* article, President Bush's favorite opus had been Marquis James's 1929 biography of Sam Houston, the father of Texas, which is understandable. But last summer he declared that he was studying *Supreme Command*, by Eliot Cohen, a fellow member with our old buddy Richard Perle of the Defense Policy Board. Cohen is a professor at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, where Wolfowitz of Arabia was once dean. So far so bad, and it gets worse. The Cohen book was widely pushed and blurbed by yet another fearless sofa samurai, the man whose face on Fox television has launched a thousand clicks, William Kristol. Cohen's central thesis is based on Clemenceau's epigram that "war is too important to be left to the generals." It is a sound thesis,

ALTHOUGH I DO NOT EXPECT **PRESIDENT BUSH** SUDDENLY TO TURN TO THE BOOKS I RECOMMEND, I'M HOPING AGAINST HOPE THE GENTLE **MRS. BUSH** MIGHT.

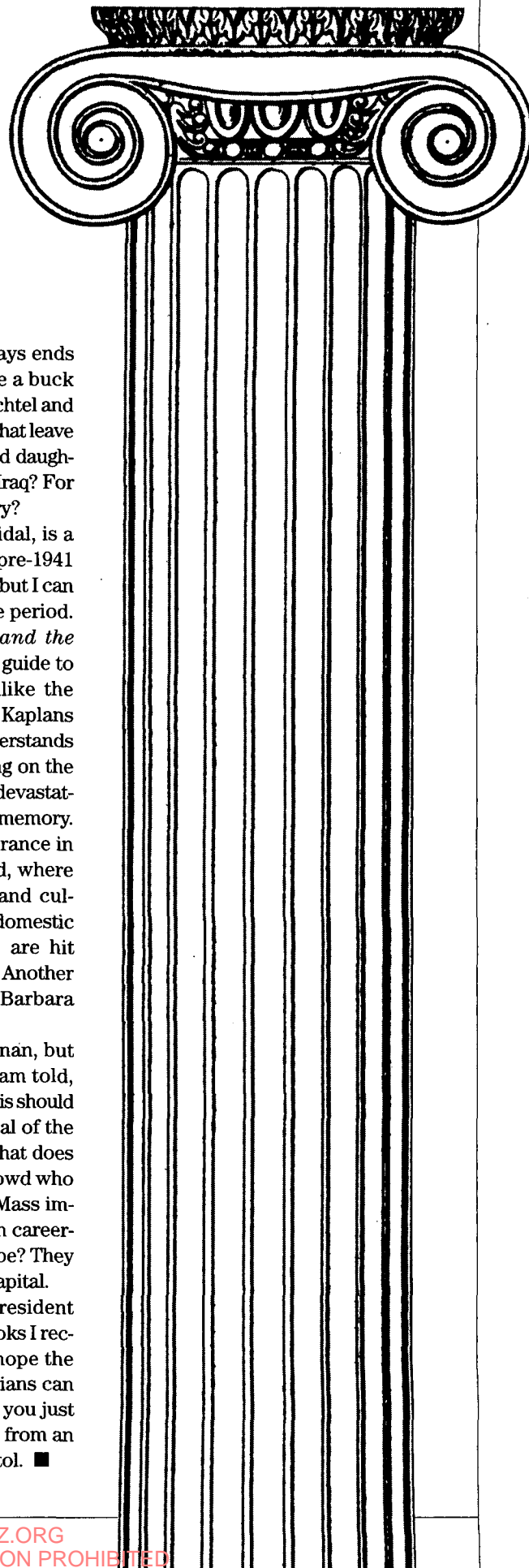
especially after our experience in Vietnam, where smart alecks like Robert MacNamara and McGeorge Bundy chose to ignore the military and led us to a famous victory.

If I may be so bold, I'd suggest these keyboard commandos take a glimpse at David Halberstam's *Best and the Brightest* before launching any more armies against our enemies. Kristol is a fan of

Prof. Victor Davis Hanson's *Autumn of War*, which speaks approvingly of the ancient Greeks waging war for good causes. (Sorry, Prof, but was Sparta's war against Athens a war against "tyranny, intolerance and theocracy" or was it because Sparta, being a military society, had to engage in non-stop fighting? I'm afraid it was the latter, but then I'm no professor of anything, except how to have a good time.) Hanson, incidentally, is also the Veep's favorite author, which indicates Haliburton will soon be rebuilding Syria, Iran, Algeria, and Libya. Heaven help us.

Robert Kagan's *Of Paradise and Power* tells us that Americans are from Mars and Europeans are from Venus. I have not read the book; otherwise I might sue the author. Mars was the God of war, and we Greeks called him Ares. (Mars is the Roman name.) Venus was the Greek Aphrodite, goddess of beauty, love, and reproduction. Mars was in love with Venus but had trouble with her, just as America has problems with Europe. What Kagan means is that Americans are fighters, and Europeans are a bunch

of sissies. Perhaps, but I do have to remind Kagan that the French alone had double the soldiers killed in just four weeks of fighting in May 1940 than the Americans lost in Vietnam in the whole ten years (120,000 vs. 57,000). No, what I humbly suggest to Kagan is to write another book, this one saying that neocons are from Venus—without the beauty, love and reproductive ability, just



feminine traits—while we true conservatives, being from Mars, are ready to fight when our freedoms are challenged and against anyone, including a Soviet Union armed with 10,000 nuclear warheads. It might even play in Peoria, although in D.C. it would bomb.

So what books should our president be reading? I'd start with *The Decline of the West* by Oswald Spengler, a book that was prophetic in identifying imperialism with cultural decadence and barbarism. *The Origins of the Second World War*, by A.J.P. Taylor, the Oxford don, is a brilliant debunking of all the absurd myths about Munich and appeasement that have animated the neoconservatives for years. Appeasement in Munich was the equivalent of Saddam's weapons of mass destruction. Also *Churchill: The End of Glory*, the political biography by John Charmley that debunked the Churchill myth. Going to war with Hitler's Germany in 1939 and thereby giving Stalin a blank check made absolutely no sense. He should have let Hitler fight Stalin to the death and then stepped in. But he could not have gained the supreme post if he had.

The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order by Samuel Huntington is a nice antidote to all the absurd euphoria about the inevitable triumph of liberal democracy. Most people in the world are not impressed with liberal democracy; they need food and shelter instead, and I can't say I blame them. Next, *A Republic, Not an Empire*, by my colleague Pat Buchanan is a masterful dissection of U.S. foreign policy from the Founding Fathers to ... horror of horrors, Bill Kristol. Also on the reading list, *Imperialism*, by the one and only J.A. Hobson. He showed a long

time ago that imperialism always ends badly, and we don't even make a buck out of it. Sure, the fat cats at Bechtel and Haliburton will, but where does that leave the average Joe whose sons and daughters went off to fight and die in Iraq? For whose interest? For whose glory?

The Golden Age, by Gore Vidal, is a wonderfully nostalgic look at pre-1941 America. Alas, I was too young, but I can sure taste the sweetness of the period. Also on my list, *The Sword and the Prophet*, a politically incorrect guide to Islam by Serge Trifkovic. Unlike the Kagans, Cohens, Kristols, and Kaplans of this world, Dr. Trifkovic understands Islam, knows we were knocking on the wrong door in Baghdad, and is devastating on the absence of historical memory. The problem of historical ignorance in today's English-speaking world, where claims about far-away lands and cultures are made on the basis of domestic multiculturalist assumptions, are hit right on the head by the author. Another must-read: *March of Folly* by Barbara Tuchman. The title says it all.

I have not read George Kennan, but his *Reflections, 1982-1995*, I am told, shakes conventional wisdom. This should be read because of his dismissal of the immigration myth, something that does not please the effete neocon crowd who believe the more the merrier. Mass immigration is not a problem with careerist neocons, and why should it be? They are well insulated around the capital.

Although I do not expect President Bush suddenly to turn to the books I recommend, I'm hoping against hope the gentle Mrs. Bush might. Librarians can speed-read. So go for it, Laura, you just might save this country of ours from an Attila the Hen like William Kristol. ■

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